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GOLF AND THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY: UNDERSTANDING DEDICATED

GOLFERS' MOTIVATIONS AND FUTURE INTENTIONS AT GOLF ALTERNATIVE

EXPERIENCES

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Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management

by

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ABSTRACT

Golf, like many sport and recreation activities, has evolved and expanded since its inception. Golf was introduced to the United States in the late-1800s and has historically had a reputation of being exclusive; a game for the upper and upper-middle class. After experiencing a dramatic increase in popularity through the early 2000s, golf suffered a decline and had only recently leveled off before seeing another surge in participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the key contributors to the success of the game in recent years has been the introduction of golf alternative facilities like Topgolf and Drive Shack that are built in a way that enhances the social experience. These facilities are experiencing great success and are welcoming a more diverse customer base than has ever been seen before in golf.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors relating to individuals' participation at golf alternative facilities to better understand the role that the experiences provided by these facilities play in the game of golf and the decisions of golfers. The study aimed to investigate the relationships among individuals' experience with the game (i.e. "golfographics"), motivations, and future participation intentions both at golf alternative activities and at traditional golf courses.

The study employed a mixed method approach and was conducted in two phases comprised of an online questionnaire ($n = 135$) and interviews ($n = 7$). Purposive and convenience sampling were used to capture a sample of mostly "dedicated golfers" who reported high levels of skill and engagement with golf. Using the Task and Ego in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) and Social Motivational Orientations Scale for Sport (SMOSS), motivation surrounding visits to Topgolf and Drive Shack were measured. Cluster analysis and analyses of variance were conducted to investigate differences in golfographic and demographic data between clusters. Private-access golfers and public-access golfers were then compared. A number

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of significant differences between these two groups were discovered, leading to important findings for the golf industry.

The study found utility in the concurrent use of achievement and social motivation frameworks to study participants in a sport setting that has a strong social component. Findings supported existing Experience Economy research suggesting that an experience and the built environment can significantly influence motivation and future intentions. The study found high social motivation in the sample, indicating that dedicated golfers frame Topgolf and Drive Shack as a social experience with a golf component, which has implications for the golf industry. The study also revealed that social factors play a role in recreation substitution choices, where many in the sample indicated a willingness to substitute Topgolf/Drive Shack for some traditional rounds of golf. Strategic recommendations for golf industry leaders, associations, and facilities are also discussed, with a focus on increasing diversity and inclusion in golf.

Future research should investigate the interrelatedness of achievement and social motivations, especially in socially-focused sport settings, and should measure the impact of these motivations on future intentions. This study should be expanded with a sample that is more representative of the diverse Topgolf and Drive Shack customer populations. Suggestions for industry should be employed and studied further, specifically the recommendation to build similar experiences at traditional golf courses.

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"The thesis that you're writing… I'm glad you finally finished it." (Anastasio et al., 1997)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Positionality Statement

Brian Soulé is an assistant teaching professor in the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management at Penn State University. He is a certified Class-A PGA Professional and has over twenty years of experience working in and studying the golf industry. He serves as assistant director of the PGA Golf Management program at Penn State, serving as an adviser and instructor to aspiring golf professionals.

Because of his experience and in-depth knowledge of the golf industry, Soulé brings observations and opinions about the emergence of golf alternatives, including the impact of the two companies examined in this study; Topgolf and Drive Shack. He is passionate about growing the game of golf to larger and more diverse populations, and sees this study as a step towards understanding some of the ways in which golf alternatives can be used to enable such growth.

The Game of Golf

History

The game of golf dates back centuries, and its origins are debated to this day. Some say that the game began in the Nordic countries and immigrated to Scotland, where it flourished. The first documentation of the game came in the 1400s in Scotland (White, 2000). On the banks of the North Sea in St. Andrews, Scotland, the world's oldest and most famed golf course, The Old

Course at St. Andrews is where the game and the business of golf began in earnest. The game began with humble roots, a stick and ball game that was meant for commoners, not just the wealthy. Early golf courses in Scotland were seen as public spaces, open to be used however the local citizens liked. This tradition remains today. The Old Course at St. Andrews is closed for golf on Sundays, when you often see family picnics and impromptu football matches happening on the fairways.

Golf came to America in the late 1800s ("PGA of America History", 2016). The first golf course ever designed in the United States was named St. Andrews, a 9-hole course located in Yonkers, New York that opened in 1888. The game gained popularity quickly in the U.S., as courses popped up across the States and as far west as Chicago by the turn of the century. In those early days, "golf professionals", individuals who were in charge of the course conditions, catering to customers, and selling equipment, managed the courses.

In 1916, Rodney Wanamaker, an affluent businessman from New York, called a meeting of golf professionals to discuss creating an organization to support the profession. It was his thought that if golf professionals could organize, they would "more effectively sell golf merchandise". The professionals agreed to this concept and in late-1916, the Professional Golfers' Association of America (PGA) was formed. The PGA of America is now the largest sport organization in the world (B.Cioffioletti, personal communication, 2016).

As was described above, golf has historically been tied to two geographic regions: the United Kingdom and the United States. At year-end 2020, the Royal and Ancient (R&A, 2021) identified 38,081 18-hole equivalent (18Heq) golf courses located in 206 countries globally. 16,156 of those courses are located in the United States, which represents 42% of the world's supply (p. 4).

According to the National Golf Foundation, 18Heq is "a measure of golf supply calculated by taking the total number of golf holes and dividing by 18" (NGF, 2015, p. 20). Of

the over 38,000 facilities identified globally, 79% of the supply was located in the top ten golfing countries in the world. 50% of those facilities are located in North and Central America, 23% in Europe, 17% in Asia and the Middle East, and 5% in Oceania, which includes the golf-crazed country of Australia (R&A, 2021, p. 5).

For the purpose of this study, most attention will be paid to the history and trends of the game of golf in the United States. From the beginning of golf in the late-1800s to the establishment of the PGA of America in 1916 and beyond, the game has grown dramatically and become a mainstay of recreation and sport industries in the United States. Golf has more recently seen shifts and changes that have led us to today's climate, as described below.

More golf courses opened in the United States in the 1990s and early 2000s than ever before in the history of golf in America. Per Hueber (2012), with a strong economy and housing market, developers saw opportunities to build courses as amenities to housing developments. In 1999, 509 courses opened in the United States, a record rate that stands to this day. During that time, more than 40% of courses built were tied to master planned communities, thus relying on a healthy housing market, which was the case in the late-1990s and early-2000s.

During those same years, golf participation saw a rapid increase, with golf participation peaking in the United States at 30.6 million golfers in 2003 (National Golf Foundation, 2012). To provide perspective, 24.3 million people played golf at a traditional course in the United States in 2019, marking a significant decrease in participation since golf's peak ("NGF's Consolidated State-of-Industry Overview", 2020).

Golf's Decline in the Late-2000s

In 2008 when the housing market crashed and shortly thereafter, the entire United States economy went into a recession and the inflated supply of golf courses became a problem for the

industry. In the following years, the supply of golfers remained stagnant and housing communities decided to close golf courses in order to cut costs and free up land for further housing development (Hueber, 2012).

The National Golf Foundation (NGF) recorded 157.5 golf course closures in 2011 versus 19 openings (National Golf Foundation, 2012). This statistic was paired with a 2.5% decline in rounds played in 2011. To combat this downward trend during those years, the golf industry created a new focus on re-engaging lapsed players and creating new players, thus increasing participation in the game of golf (www.golf20.net). This attempted revitalization of the game of golf was called "Golf 2.0". In Golf 2.0, the industry's leading organizations such as the Professional Golfers' Association of America (PGA), the United States Golf Association (USGA), and major golf equipment manufacturers invested millions of dollars in marketing and programming the game (Graves, 2012). While the program received widespread national attention and support from industry leaders, it has since gone by the wayside and is no longer being marketed to golf professionals as the primary programming efforts of the golf industry for revitalization efforts.

Moss (2001) provided a rich account of golf's history in the United States in which he focused on the role of the country club in society and how such clubs influenced access to the game of golf. His book outlines the role that country clubs have played as an access point in upper and upper-middle class culture. The book also highlighted rules that controlled eligibility in golf competition and membership at clubs, revealing exclusionary policies that controlled for gender and race. In short, golf in America, especially at country clubs, has had a history of working against inclusion, commercialization, and growth to expanding customer bases.

In recent years, the industry has become more inventive and has worked to become more diverse and inclusive to those who have not played the game before. The industry now provides innovative facilities and offers programming aimed at attracting new golfers to the game. These

initiatives have helped push the game away from its "exclusive game for the rich" stereotype and towards a more inclusive philosophy nationwide. The PGA of America, working with other leading international golf organizations such as the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R&A) and the United States Golf Association (USGA), recently introduced "Get Golf Ready", a program aimed at introducing people to the game of golf in a fun, engaging five-day program. The program is affordable, and is focused on attracting a diverse population of new players. The PGA of America states that this program has seen great success since its inception ("Get Golf Ready – Frequently Asked Questions", 2014). In 2014 alone, nearly 99,000 new golfers were introduced to the game through Get Golf Ready, and according to the PGA, these golfers averaged spending $1,165 on golf and golf equipment in their first year. Of those surveyed, "86% of them continue to play the game" a year after participating in Get Golf Ready. These efforts have helped guide the industry out of the recession and into a new era, according to experts.

In a conversation with one such expert, Golf Datatech's managing partner Tom Stine, Mr. Stine indicated that he feels the golf industry in the United States has reached a point of "equilibrium" after seeing a sharp decline in key metrics after the United States housing market crash (personal communication, October 20, 2016). He said we have seen this both in equipment sales and in golf course openings and closures. Citing data from the early 2000s, Mr. Stine indicated that the golf industry built too many courses in a period of economic growth, most of which were built as amenities to housing communities. At that time, golfers had ample discretionary income to allow them to afford to play golf. Mr. Stine noted that the market crash of 2008 was a "reality check" for individuals regarding discretionary time and income, and that consumers have emerged from the shock of the market crash with more tempered spending habits.

The key metrics that are used to track the health of the golf industry in the United States, namely the number of golfers and the number of rounds played, saw a slight increase in 2015

over 2014 (Heitner, 2016), with 2.2 million new golfers trying the game. This number stayed steady through the start of the COVID-19 pandemic as of year-end 2019 ("NGF's Consolidated State-of-Industry Overview", 2020). These statistics support Mr. Stine's suggestion that the golf industry has gone through a "correction phase" resulting in what he believes is the "new norm" in the golf industry.

Golf Alternatives

A trend that came out of the correction phase of golf was the introduction and development of "golf alternatives", activities that contain key components of golf, but are conducted in different ways or in different settings. The National Golf Foundation (NGF) president Joe Beditz has stated, "Golf participation is evolving. On-course, green-grass participation is holding its own and off-course is continuing to grow" (NGF, 2018, p. 2).

In recent years, the golf industry has begun to see an increase in these alternative opportunities for people to play the game of golf beyond the traditional 9- and 18-hole round format. According to the National Golf Foundation, over twenty-three million people engaged in "off-course golf experiences" in the United States in 2019, ten million of whom *only* engaged with the sport at non-traditional facilities ("NGF's Consolidated State-of-Industry Overview", 2020).

Those numbers increased again in 2020, even amidst a global pandemic. Per Joe Beditz, President and Chief Executive Officer of the NGF, the United States experienced a substantial increase in off-course golf participation. The NGF measured three nearly-equal and mutually-exclusive groups of American golfers in 2020 (Beditz, 2021). Just over twelve million people belonged to each of the following groups: those who played *only* on-course golf, those who played on-course and off-course golf, and those who played *only* off-course golf. Beditz cites

interesting differences among these groups. Exclusive on-course golfers average 50 years of age and are 29% female. On- and off-course golfers average 42 years and are 21% female. Finally, exclusive off-course golfers average 31 years of age and are 45% female. These data from the NGF show evidence of a younger, and more gender-equal demographic playing at off-course facilities, like those that are the subject of the current study.

These alternative opportunities often minimize both cost and time, the two most cited constraints to participation in golf (Jun & Kyle, 2011a; Jun & Kyle, 2011b; Petrick et al., 2001). These alternatives include indoor golf simulators, foot golf (a game in which players kick a soccer ball towards a large hole with the intent to mimic traditional golf), shortened experiences such as 3- and 6-hole courses and putting courses, and a new business model that is gaining popularity in the United States that can be described as a driving range with a social component, where participants compete in games of varying difficulty while allowing for social interaction, relaxation, and eating and drinking. Two companies are emerging as the primary competitors in this space. These companies are named Topgolf and Drive Shack. Because Topgolf has emerged as the industry leader, most current research on this model centers around Topgolf. Figure 1-1 offers a comparison of traditional golf driving ranges that are either standalone or found at traditional golf courses, Topgolf, and Drive Shack.

Feature	Traditional Driving Range	Topgolf	Drive Shack
Driving range with targets	✅	✅	✅
Real grass surface	✅	❌	❌
Pay by the quantity of balls	✅	❌	❌
Pay by the hour	❌	✅	✅
Rental clubs available	✅	✅	✅
Food and beverage service with dedicated server	❌	✅	✅
Golf ball tracking technology (details)	❌	✅ (Proprietary)	✅ (TrackMan™)
Live sports on TV	❌	✅	✅
Concierge	❌	✅	✅
Lounge with seating	❌	✅	✅
Arcade	❌	❌	✅
Loud, lively music	❌	✅	✅

Figure **1-1**: Comparison of driving ranges, Topgolf, and Drive Shack

Topgolf was established in the United Kingdom in 2000 and was brought to the United States in 2005 by WestRiver Group, the lead Topgolf investor in the United States, with a flagship venue in Alexandria, Virginia. Callaway Golf Company, which is one of the leading golf equipment, footwear, and apparel companies in the world, became an investor in 2006. Topgolf has sixty-seven "venues" in the United States, with six more under construction. The term "venue", when discussing to Topgolf in this study, refers to their standalone flagship facilities with full-size driving ranges, multiple levels of hitting bays, food and beverage options, and other amenities. Topgolf games are fun and engaging, highlighted by the company's proprietary golf ball tracking technology. This technology allows for real-time results for all golf shots, and the ability to play a variety of games aiming at the facilities' many targets. There are locations in five other countries worldwide, namely, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates. Worldwide, Topgolf saw an average of 54,794 visits per day in 2020 ("About Us", 2021). At their United States locations, Topgolf attracts a younger, more diverse demographic than what is seen at traditional golf courses (Lombardo, 2018).

After seeing great success from its flagship "venues", Topgolf has diversified its offerings to include concepts called "Lounge by Topgolf", "Toptracer", "Toptracer Range", "Topgolf Swing Suite", "Topgolf Studios", "Topgolf Live", and "World Golf Tour by Topgolf" ("About Us", 2021). These concepts range from indoor golf simulator lounges to virtual golf ball tracing technology for TV viewing to mobile versions of their technologies that can be installed at traditional green grass facilities. The current study focused specifically on the company's original flagship venue model.

Drive Shack was established in 2018 with the opening of its Orlando-based venue ("Drive Shack", 2021). The design of Drive Shack venues is very similar to Topgolf flagship venues. They differ in the technology that is used to track golf balls. Topgolf's proprietary technology employs the use of computer chips in each golf ball. Drive Shack, on the other hand, uses a doppler radar technology provided by an industry-leading golf launch monitor company, TrackMan. TrackMan also allows customers to "play" real golf courses with their golf simulator technology.

Drive Shack grew with three more venue openings in 2019. Development is under way for a fifth venue on Randall's Island, NY. In 2021, Drive Shack opened its first "Puttery" venue in Dallas, TX and is aggressively developing this arm of the business, with new venues under development in Charlotte, NC, Washington, D.C., Miami, FL, and Houston, TX. The concept is an "adults-only, competitive socializing and immersive entertainment experience" focusing on putting, a lively bar scene, and opportunities for adults to socialize ("Investor Relations", 2021).

The golf industry is seeking information about the effect of companies like Topgolf and Drive Shack on the sport of golf. Are Topgolf and Drive Shack creating new golfers? If so, what are the demographics of those people? Are these companies leading people to want to play more traditional golf? A recent Topgolf study answered many of these questions, and much of the data contradicted the demographics of traditional golf (Lombardo, 2018).

Many Topgolf participants are new to the game, with 51% of participants self-identifying as new golfers, and another 27% reporting as only occasional golfers (1-7 rounds at a traditional course per year). Participants are also younger, with 54% of participants falling between the ages of 18 and 34, and only 16% reported as being 45 years of age or older. This is a stark contrast to previous reports on traditional golf. In 2014, Mark King, then-CEO of TaylorMade Golf, a leading brand in the industry, reported that there was a 10-year 35% decrease in people taking up the game of golf in the 18-30-year-old age range (Gillis, 2014). One of the most surprising results of the Lombardo study, according to PGA of America Past-President Paul Levy (Personal communication, April 28, 2018), is that 75% of nongolfers surveyed after playing Topgolf showed an interest in playing on a traditional golf course. If even a fraction of those participants follows through with their interest in playing traditional golf, it would have a remarkable impact on green-grass golf courses.

It appears that there is a growing market in non-traditional golf participation. The industry is just beginning to recognize this shift and it can be argued there is a need to understand the motivations and future intentions of people who participate in golf alternatives, especially as the golf industry continues to battle the modern-day challenges that keep people from playing the game.

Dedicated Golfers

Research to date on Topgolf and Drive Shack customers has focused on the non-golfer and beginner golfer populations (Lombardo, 2018). While there is a need to further understand these populations, the industry must also understand how Topgolf and Drive Shack are viewed by golfers who exhibit a long-standing dedication to the game. These golfers could be considered the lifeblood of the traditional golf course industry, and understanding how experiences like those

offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack influences this population is important. The current study was designed to investigate the motivations and future intentions of dedicated golfers.

It is important to define the term "dedicated golfer" to give context to the current study. While the term "dedicated golfer" has not been used in the existing literature, Petrick et al. (2001) used the experience use history framework to categorize golfers based on a number of factors, including how frequently golfers play and take lessons. In their work, a "Veteran" is defined as "golfers with high total experience on many courses" (p. 63). As will be presented in Chapter 4, golfers in the current sample average over 45 rounds of golf per year and 48.9% of the sample indicated having taken a golf lesson in the previous year, compared to 17% of all golfers in the United States (NGF, 2019). Taking into consideration the definition of "veteran golfers" from Petrick and colleagues, combined with the researcher's knowledge and experience in the golf industry, this study defines a "dedicated golfer" as one who plays traditional golf an average of twice per month or more and has a low average score compared to the general golfing public.

The researcher identified many potential benefits of studying this population, including the opportunity to use the results of the study to make impactful suggestions for traditional golf, including suggestions for public and private facilities alike. Focusing on this population also has the potential to inform the body of knowledge in achievement and social motivation in sport where much of the previous research has focused on youth (Allen, 2003, 2005; Nicholls, 1984).

The Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Golf

The current study began approximately one year after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, in March 2021. Much has changed in the world since then, including some important trends in the golf industry. According to the NGF, 2020 "was a banner year for rounds-played, despite virus-related spring (2020) shutdowns that affected half the nation's courses" ("Industry

Update: Tracking the Impacts of COVID-19", 2022). While year-end data will not be compiled until early 2022, the 2021 golf season is estimated to have exceeded even 2020's record-setting figures by four to five percent. The NGF estimates that up to twenty-five million rounds of traditional golf were played in 2021. The golf industry "…will be up 18-19% over the three-year, pre-pandemic average(s) of 2017, 2018, and 2019."

According to the NGF's Vice President of Player Development and Engagement Ted Eleftheriou (2021), other encouraging indicators have emerged since the onset of the pandemic. Three million people started playing the game of golf in 2020, a record high. Eleftheriou argues that much more can be done to take advantage of this influx of new golfers. The current study will provide suggestions for industry professionals and organizations to capitalize on these record-breaking numbers, with specific guidance towards converting people who have only visited Topgolf and Drive Shack.

Golfers' Constraints and Substitution

One of the challenges the golf industry is currently facing is that of participants' constraints (Jun & Kyle, 2011a; Jun & Kyle, 2011b; McGinnis & Gentry, 2006; Petrick et al., 2001). Leisure constraints research aims to "investigate factors that are assumed by researchers and/or perceived or experienced by individuals to limit the formation of leisure preferences and/or to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment of leisure" (Jackson, 2005, p. 3). Recent research has shown that those who have an interest in playing golf face constraints, specifically the constraints of time and money. With increased strains on leisure time (Godbey et al., 2010; Kay & Jackson, 1991), people are seeking leisure experiences that take less time, yet fulfill participants' desires. Topgolf and Drive Shack have found ways to provide a golf experience for less time (an average visit length of two hours, according to Topgolf, "Fact Sheet", 2019) and less

money than a traditional round of golf. This model has been remarkably successful for Topgolf and Drive Shack, and much of this success is directly attributable to the design of the experience.

In the recreation setting, when people face constraints to participation in a specific activity, such as in traditional golf, some may choose to substitute their preferred activity with another. Vaske (1980) defined substitutability as the extent to which one alternative recreation activity can replace another while still producing desired experiences and benefits. Choi et al. (1994) further developed the substitutability framework by examining the interactions between skill specialization levels, social groups, and alternative activities, showing evidence that social groups and alternative activities are related when people make substitution choices.

Iso-Ahola (1986) introduced the idea that leisure choices can be substituted without a loss of satisfaction. The author's work was centered around substitution when the individual's primary choice is not available, which is a scenario that happens often with outdoor sports, such as golf. Another defining characteristic of golf is that most golfers are very committed to the game (Petrick, 2002). Sutton and Oh (2015) used the substitutability framework to measure the relationship between commitment to a preferred activity and interest in a substitute activity. They found that committed recreational fishers made various decisions to substitute based on the timing of participation, the location or availability of places to fish, and an evaluation of the substitute activity.

The current study was designed to inquire about substitution. Participants were asked whether experiences at Topgolf and/or Drive Shack affected future intentions both with Topgolf/Drive Shack and with traditional golf. The researcher wanted to know if an experience at Topgolf or Drive Shack had an effect on participants' willingness to substitute visits to Topgolf/Drive Shack for rounds of traditional golf.

The Experience Economy and the Experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack

We are in the midst of what Pine and Gilmore (1998) referred to as the "'experience economy', where people no longer focus so much on material possessions but on the experiences they are able to have in their lives" (Henley Centre, 2005, p. 29). These experiences result in positive memories (tom Dieck, Jung, & Rauschnabel, 2018), more enduring satisfaction (Kumar et al., 2014), greater happiness, pleasantness, and excitement (Carter & Gilovich, 2010), more social connections (Van Boven et al., 2010), and more.

The experience economy framework will be expanded upon later in this dissertation; however, the key components are highlighted in this section to give context to the current study. In the experience economy, Pine and Gilmore (1998) state that businesses should strive to provide memorable experiences in order to satisfy the modern customer. In this framework, the service or activity is simply the "stage" around which an entire experience is built.

Since they were introduced in the United States, Topgolf and Drive Shack have become the leaders in manufacturing fun, engaging, personal golf experiences. Pine and Gilmore (1998) state that the best experience providers "go beyond the (basic) function and compete on the basis of providing an experience" (p. 99). Topgolf and Drive Shack deliver experiences akin to a golf practice driving range, where customers are given golf balls and told to "have fun". Where Topgolf and Drive Shack excel is by using the *stage* of a driving range to provide a memorable *experience*.

The experience begins when customers drive past a Topgolf or Drive Shack facility, all of which are built with a distinct footprint and a modern façade. Customers walk up the steps and into the main lobby, often on the second floor of the operation. A staff member always greets customers upon entry in a personal manner, setting the tone for a relaxed environment where the ultimate goal is for customers to have fun. To the left is check in, and to the right is a bustling bar

with craft beer, good food, and televisions set to sporting events. Within moments, customers know that this is not a traditional driving range.

Another characteristic of the experience economy framework is the way in which participants engage in the overall experience. Pine and Gilmore (1998) identify two variables: participation and connection (or environmental relationship, p. 101-102). In the case of Topgolf and Drive Shack, most users are active, rather than passive, participants. This requires that they themselves influence the interaction with the experience, which is done by playing games using the Topgolf and Drive Shack technologies. When considering how participants connect with the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience, most are immersed in the activity, engaging all senses, rather than simply observing. In this regard, for a participant who is actively participating and immersed in the experience, Pine and Gilmore would define Topgolf and Drive Shack as an "escapist" experience (p. 102), or, for those who are a bit more passive, it becomes an "esthetic" experience. Topgolf and Drive Shack see all types of engagement with the experience, making it a dynamic business model and providing experiences for a diverse audience.

When golfers go to a driving range, they purchase the commodity: golf balls with which they practice. At Topgolf and Drive Shack, customers pay a fee that gives them a reserved space, known as a hitting bay. Many customers don't even hit a golf shot, but rather go to Topgolf and Drive Shack with friends to enjoy the atmosphere and to socialize. Pine and Gilmore (1998) would say that this is a defining characteristic of an experience-driven business, where guests are charged an "admission fee", rather than a fee for each service or product purchased (p. 100).

The admission fee at Topgolf and Drive Shack is just the first opportunity for customers to spend money at the facility. "Charging admission - requiring customers to pay for the experience - does not mean that companies have to stop selling goods and services. Disney generates significant profits from parking, food, and other service fees… as well as from the sale of memorabilia" (p. 101). Topgolf and Drive Shack do the same, primarily through food and

beverage sales brought to each hitting bay by a dedicated server. The Topgolf and Drive Shack experience, financially speaking, is a well thought out blueprint of Pine and Gilmore's (1998) ideal enterprise.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) identified five design factors that will be expanded upon later in this paper. Generally speaking, experiences must be designed in a harmonious, positive manner. Topgolf and Drive Shack have clearly designed their facilities with the design factors described in the experience economy. This leads to a consistent experience for customers, regardless of which Topgolf or Drive Shack venue they visit.

The authors of the Experience Economy framework predicted that the growth of the experience economy would influence existing businesses and challenge the status quo of many industries: "That's also how the experience economy will grow: through the 'gales of creative destruction,' …that is, business innovation, which threatens to render irrelevant those who regulate themselves to the diminishing world of goods and services" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 105).

Is this what is happening with Topgolf and Drive Shack? Are these business models threatening more traditional golf businesses, or are Topgolf and Drive Shack introducing people to golf by way of a highly engaging golf experience? The golf industry needs to understand what motivates people to go to Topgolf and Drive Shack, and perhaps adapt to create experiences that are inviting to those customers. This study aspires to identify what it is that Topgolf and Drive Shack offers that motivates more than twenty million people to enter through their doors every year ("About Us", 2021; Lombardo, 2018).

The Built Experience

Gibbs and Holoway (2018) argue that the experience economy can be especially impactful through the production of "experience landscapes" (p. 248). The authors suggest that such landscapes are being created as a part of the experience economy, with design features being deliberately employed to attract participants. In the case of Topgolf and Drive Shack, one could argue that the designers have created a dynamic experience landscape that includes attractive features from many realms, ranging from sport and leisure landscapes to more social experiences.

This is where limitations on experience research exist. Little to no research has been conducted on multifunctional experience landscapes such as Topgolf and Drive Shack, where the primary focus is the activity, but other opportunities such as the food and beverage operations exist to enhance the experience. In addition, few researchers have investigated factors associated with visitor engagement in multifunctional experience landscapes (tom Dieck et al., 2018), particularly motivation and future participation intentions.

Statement of the Problem

Much is known about golfer motivation (Petrick et al., 2001), but to date, limited research exists on the motivations of individuals who seek golf alternative activities, such as the experiences provided by Topgolf and Drive Shack. With the aforementioned differences in the demographic profiles of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants versus traditional golfers, there is likely a difference in what is motivating this new population to participate at a facility that has built an experience environment around the game of golf and a highly-engaging social atmosphere. While most research has focused on nongolfers and beginner golfers at Topgolf and Drive Shack, there is a need to understand dedicated golfers' motivations and future intentions

surrounding Topgolf and Drive Shack experiences. Dedicated golfers are critical to the health of the golf industry, and learning more about how they interact with these golf alternative activities will be critical for the future health of the industry. It is also important to the recreation, leisure, and specifically, golf, industries to understand future participation intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors relating to dedicated golfers' participation in golf, specifically at golf alternative activities. The study aimed to investigate dedicated golfers' motivation to participate in a multifunctional golf experience like those offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Furthermore, the study aimed to investigate factors relating to future participation intentions both at Topgolf and Drive Shack and in traditional golf settings, and the role that motivation profiles play in those intentions. The study aimed to investigate "golfographics" (Petrick, 2002, p. 336), or involvement and skill level in golf, of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants to aid in more fully understanding the different sub-groups who patronize the facilities.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed by this study are as follows:

R^1: What are the experience use history and demographic profiles of dedicated golfers who have visited Topgolf or Topgolf and Drive Shack?

R^2: What are dedicated golfers' motivations for visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2a}: What are dedicated golfers' achievement goal orientations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2b}: What are dedicated golfers' social motivations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2c}: What is the relationship among Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' demographics, experience use history, achievement goal orientations, and social motivations?

R^3: What are dedicated golfers' future golf intentions, both at nontraditional golf experiences and at traditional golf courses, after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{3a}: What is the relationship among demographics, experience use history, future intentions, and motivations?

After initial data analysis was completed, a fourth research question was added to address differences that were discovered between private-access and public-access golfers. Justification for this addition is provided in Chapter 3.

R^4: What are the differences between private-access and public-access golfers' motivations to visit Topgolf and Topgolf and Drive Shack?

R^{4a}: How do these differences influence future intentions for participation at Topgolf/Topgolf and Drive Shack and at traditional golf, if at all?

Significance of the Study

This study has the potential to contribute to the recreation and golf industries, as well as to advance areas of academic discourse, specifically at the intersection of achievement motivation and social motivation.

In the golf industry, the study was the first to examine the motivation of dedicated golfers at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Findings from this study will lead to further understanding of the roles of Topgolf and Drive Shack in the golfing lives of dedicated golfers, which will in turn allow managers in recreation and golf-related fields to alter offerings in order to cater to this important customer base. The study also informs the industry about opportunities within the non-golfer and beginner golfer populations. Using this study's findings, golf, recreation, sport, and hospitality industry professionals will be able to target marketing and advertising to many different sub-populations of consumers, focusing on achievement and social motivations.

The study also drilled deeper into the unique interaction of social- versus achievement-specific motivations. Findings in this area have the potential again to impact managerial decisions in recreation and in golf, specifically. An additional contribution to industry is the study of future participation intentions and the impact of Topgolf and Drive Shack experiences on dedicated golfers' future intentions both at golf alternative facilities and at traditional golf courses.

A recent National Golf Foundation survey reported that 75% of nongolfers are interested in playing at a traditional course after playing Topgolf and Drive Shack (Lombardo, 2018). At the conclusion of this study, gained a better understanding of the interactions between Topgolf and Drive Shack customers' motivations, previous golf experience, and future intentions both at Topgolf and Drive Shack and at traditional golf courses. This will take the NGF study one step further and will allow for a richer understanding of a specific subset of Topgolf and Drive Shack customers and their future intentions.

Finally, the findings from this study will have the potential to contribute to the efforts of golf's governing bodies such as the PGA of America, the United States Golf Association, and the R&A. The outcomes of this study can be used to cross-market to non-traditional golfers such as those found at Topgolf and Drive Shack, potentially creating an increase in the overall population of golfers, which is a primary goal of the aforementioned organizations.

The study will also contribute to academic discourse in many areas, including the ongoing study of unique sport-based experience landscapes and participant motivation. The study informs the ongoing development of the experience economy framework by asking participants about the influence of the built environment on the experience, on motivations, and on future intentions.

The study also focused on the interaction of social and achievement motivations, of which there is minimal existing research (Hodge, Allen, & Smellie, 2008; Mendez-Gimenez, Cecchini-Estrada, & Fernandez-Rio, 2018). Social and achievement motivations will be introduced in Chapter 2, and important findings are provided later in the study that may influence future research in this area of inquiry.

Finally, the study investigated the relationships between motivation profiles, future intentions, and substitution preferences in this unique setting that combines social and sport components into an overall consumer experience.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This study draws from many disciplines because of the unique nature of the experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack. First, this review will introduce the Experience Economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) as a contextual framework for the study. It is important to understand the underlying foundations of what make experiences impactful, which will help the reader appreciate how the environment at Topgolf and Drive Shack influences customers.

Within the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience, there are many factors at play that likely influence a person's motivation to participate. This section will outline the meta-theory of Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Deci & Ryan, 1985) in an effort to impress the importance of understanding the principles of motivation in recreation, sport, and social settings. SDT is widely regarded as the leading theory in motivation, initiative, and achievement in the field of recreation and sport, and its sub-theories will play an important role in the current study. Included in this introduction is an overview of intrinsic motivation (Pelletier et al., 1995) and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991) and the roles they play in overall motivation.

Of the aforementioned SDT sub-theories, this project will employ two: Achievement goal theory (Nicholls, 1984) and social motivational orientation theory (Allen, 2003, 2005). These two sub-theories were chosen specifically because Topgolf and Drive Shack combine a sport-based achievement component via golf with a strong socialization component, a unique combination that is seeing unprecedented success in the United States. The only similar offering specific to the golf industry that combines these components is "screen golf", which is very popular in South

Korea (Choi, 2016; Han & Hwang, 2014; Han, Baek et al., 2014). The current study will be one

of the first to employ these two sub-theories of SDT to investigate the motivational profiles of

customers participating in an activity that combines sport with an intentionally designed social

component (Hodge et al., 2008).

The Experience Economy

The contextual framework used in this study is that of the Experience Economy (Pine &

Gilmore, 1998). The authors predicted that experiences would be the next distinct economic

offering, following in the footsteps of the industrial and service economies of the past. In this

experience economy Pine and Gilmore state, "To realize the full benefits of staging

experiences… businesses must deliberately design engaging experiences that command a fee" (p.

97). The transition from a service focus to an experiential focus would be a difficult task, but a

lucrative one if executed well. This section will offer an overview of the original Experience

Economy framework as well as highlight more recent empirical work.

Pine and Gilmore (1998) stated that "Excellent design, marketing, and delivery will be

every bit as crucial for experiences as they are for goods and services" (p. 101). In this emerging

experience economy, the service being offered is the "stage" for an engaging experience, one that

is at times immersive and always memorable (p. 98). Experiences are to be "inherently personal,

existing only in the mind of an individual who has been engaged on an emotional, physical,

intellectual, or even spiritual level" (p. 99).

Another defining characteristic of the experience economy in business form is the way in

which participants engage in the experience. Pine and Gilmore (1998) identify two variables:

participation and connection (or environmental relationship, p. 101-102). "At one end of the

spectrum lies passive participation, in which customers don't affect the performance at all. At the

other end of the spectrum lies active participation, in which customers play key roles in creating the performance or event that yields the experience" (p. 101). Both types of participation can frame an experience, ranging from a concertgoer sitting quietly in her seat to a child petting the animals in an interactive area of the local zoo.

The second dimension of engagement is "connection", or the environmental relationship with the experience environment (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 101). The ends of the connection spectrum are described as "absorption" in which participants simply take in what is happening, and "immersion" in which participants are immersed in the sights, sounds, and smells of the experience (p. 101-102).

From the engagement variables of participation and connection come what Pine and Gilmore refer to as the four "realms of an experience" (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 102). The realm in which people participate more passively and the connection is described as absorption is referred to as "entertainment". "Educational" events tend to be more active than passive, but participants connect with the event by absorbing. "Escapist" experiences involve active participation and are often more immersive, where participants lose themselves in the experience. Finally, an experience is considered to be "esthetic" in nature by reducing the amount of participation involved in escapist experiences, in which the participant has little or no interaction with the experience itself, but are immersed. Cirque du Soleil shows in Las Vegas are an excellent example of esthetic experiences, where participants often lose themselves, however are passive in their participation.

The final factor Pine and Gilmore (1998) identify as being critical to success is the design of the experience. The factors of design identified by the authors are to:

- theme the experience;

- harmonize impressions with positive cues;

- eliminate negative cues;

- mix in memorabilia;

- engage all five sense (p. 102-105)

As previously highlighted, Gibbs and Holloway (2018) described the influence of "experience landscapes" (p. 248), or experiences that are built to incorporate Pine and Gilmore's aforementioned design factors. These landscapes are "specifically produced for, and as a part of, the activities participants are engaged in" (p. 249). They may result from a complete or part reorientation of the existing landscape, and often become multi-functional in the design process.

Certain industries have had success in building experiences, especially in recreation and tourism. Hosany and Witham (2010) studied the four realms of the tourism experience in their investigation of cruisers using the experience economy framework. They investigated the ways in which cruise lines can facilitate all four realms of education, entertainment, escape, and esthetics as a result of varied design features and activities. The researchers did this by asking cruisers about their experiences, memories, arousal levels, perceived quality of the cruise, intention to recommend, and satisfaction (p. 355). Employing confirmatory factor analysis, the authors found that the four realms of experience proposed by Pine and Gilmore were represented in cruisers' experiences (p. 359).

The authors used multiple regression analyses to investigate the effect of the four realms of experience on the aforementioned outcome variables. They found significant relationships between the four dimensions of cruisers' experiences and intention to recommend the cruise. Further, they found that the esthetics dimension of the experience accounted for "most of the variance in predicting arousal, memory, overall perceived quality, satisfaction, and intention to recommend" (Hosany & Witham, 2010, p. 359). This shows the impact that sound design can have on user experience.

Use of the Experience Economy framework has expanded within recreation and sport in recent years (Asan & Emeksiz, 2018; Funk, 2017). Asan and Emeksiz investigated outdoor

recreation experience design and its effect on participant motivations and preferences. They preface their study by stating, "In the literature, the concept of experience coexists with the terms activity, perception, meaning, motivation, and evaluation" (p. 4). More specifically addressing the role of the experience in consumer motivation and behavior, they added "…(the experience) is related to quality of experience, importance of human interaction, prior knowledge, which is acquired through past experiences, together with the role of external stimuli" (Volo, 2010, in Asan & Emeksiz, p. 4). The authors sought to explore the interactivity of these factors in the context of a recreation experience.

Asan and Emeksiz (2018) found relationships among outdoor recreation motivations and participant experiences. Integrating the Experience Economy framework into their analysis, they concluded that participants were engaged in the four original "experiences" put forth by Pine and Gilmore (1998) of education, aesthetic, entertainment and escape. They also found significant relationship between recreation motivations and experiences, highlighting the utility of the Experience Economy framework within the recreation setting. The current study seeks to expand upon these findings by investigating the relationships between motivation and experiences.

More specific to sport, Funk (2017) introduced a "sport experience design (SX)" framework, which consists of three interrelated elements (p. 151). The design was built by a 17-scholar panel with experience in the field. The framework was built specifically for use by sport organizations delivering spectator experiences, but the authors note that the framework can also be employed in participant sport. The three elements of sport experience design are:

1. The sport context in which a sport consumer navigates through an experience and interacts with touchpoints

2. The sport user, with mental processes, psychological needs, and personal characteristics, and

3. The sport organization, which produces the sport experience to achieve organizational

   goals (Funk, 2017, p. 145)

Funk (2017) encourages researchers to "consider the unique characteristics of sport to

provide sport organizations with actionable recommendations. Developing and delivering sport

experiences to meet the needs and wants of sports consumers has implications for sport

organizations, whose purpose is to provide sport consumers with a pleasurable experience by

focusing on service quality and satisfaction to achieve organizational goals" (p. 146). Using

elements of the Experience Economy framework, combined with service to enhance the

experience, the customer experience can be greatly enhanced, according to Funk's panel.

Along similar lines, Yoshida (2017) provided a review of studies examining the

connected roles that a sport product or experiences, services and service quality, social

interactions among customers, and other factors play in the consumer experience. Yoshida's

suggestions apply to sport management for spectator sports, but can be applied directly to the

Topgolf/Drive Shack experience model. Yoshida suggests that this framework should be

investigated in participant sports. While the specific framework is not adopted for the current

study, the study does investigate the relationships between a core product or experience, service

quality, and social interactions. The current study will also inquire about future intentions of

participants and measure the impact of Yoshida's framework on those future intentions.

The experience economy framework was chosen as a contextual framework for this study

because Topgolf and Drive Shack are clearly providing more than just a product or a service. The

companies are selling experiences that have been carefully and thoughtfully crafted. They have

used the built environment to set up spaces that purposefully facilitate such experiences. Both

companies have had incredible success in this pursuit, as was discussed in Chapter 1. The current

study will consider the experiences and services provided by Topgolf and Drive Shack,

companies that have shown success combining sport with many of the foundations of the experience economy framework.

<div align="center">**Self-Determination Theory**</div>

Introduction to the Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a meta-theory for the study of human motivation and personality (Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT also serves as a tool to help understand how social and cultural influences impact individuals' well-being. SDT states that the realization of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are critical to motivation, engagement, and persistence. Specifically, autonomy is defined within SDT as an individual's efforts to determine their own actions and outcomes. Competence is described as an individual's ability to show skill and efficacy in a chosen activity. Finally, relatedness is defined as the ability to have satisfying interactions and relationships with others.

Early work on SDT began with Edward Deci's study of intrinsic motivation where he examined how the psychological theories related to intrinsic motivation were formed (Deci, 1975; Deci, 1980). Deci and Ryan built upon their collective interest in human motivation until they released their seminal book on SDT, entitled *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior* (1985). In this book, the authors put forward the idea that humans act on internal and external forces, and are vulnerable to those same forces.

According to Deci and Ryan (2008), most pre-SDT motivation models "treated motivation as a unitary concept that varies primarily in amount" (p. 14). In this sense, researchers previously hypothesized that increased motivation in any form would yield greater achievement and more successful functioning. When SDT was conceptualized, Deci and Ryan suggested that

the type, rather than the amount, of motivation is more important in "predicting life's important outcomes" (p. 14). The two types of motivation that were specified were autonomous and controlled motivation. This was a serious departure from previous motivation theories, putting SDT on the forefront of motivational theory research in the 1980s.

According to selfdeterminationtheory.org, SDT (2019) "represents a broad framework for the study of human motivation and personality". It is an "organismic dialectical approach", meaning "people are active organisms with evolved tendencies towards growing… mastering (challenges)… and integrating new experiences into a coherent sense of self". In this description, people need "psychological nutrients" that help with psychological growth, namely the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. As these needs are met, people will experience greater functionality and wellness. In its simplest form, SDT seeks to account for two views; that humans act with intrinsic motivation, and that their actions can be influenced by external factors. SDT attempts to explain the different motivations and forces that affect humans' decisions and actions.

Deci and Ryan (1987) state that some intentional behaviors are initiated and regulated through choice as an expression of oneself, called self-determined behaviors. Other intentional behaviors are pressured and coerced by social and environmental forces and thus do not represent true individual choice. These behaviors are referred to as controlled behaviors. One of the main conclusions from Deci and Ryan's 1987 article is that autonomy, the sense that one's actions emanate from one's self and are one's own, is crucial in motivation. The more autonomous the behavior, the more it is endorsed by the whole self and is experienced as an action for which the self is responsible. Autonomy therefore plays a critical role, especially in intrinsic motivation.

In Deci and Ryan's 2019 review of the state of SDT, they note that "literally thousands" of studies have been conducted supporting the importance of autonomous motivation for sustained engagement in sport…" (p. 140). This shows that one of the main uses of this theory in

sport has been to investigate persistence. Other areas of research have emerged, including well-being and ill-being, coaching climates, and physical education. Deci and Ryan suggest that future research should work toward a "greater refinement of methods" and measures and "greater depth in mechanistic understanding of motivational processes and effects" (p. 143). The current study seeks to use the SDT framework and two sub-theories to continue to advance knowledge in human motivation.

The experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack have hypothetically been built to address all three of the primary needs of self-determined behavior. Competence can be affirmed in ways specific to ability, because customers can choose how easy or difficult of a game they want to play. Autonomy is a key component at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Customers can play as much or as little as they want and are in full control of the experience. Finally, relatedness is heightened in every part of the experience, beginning by the initial greeting of all customers at the front door to the setup of the hitting bays with social areas, all the way to the inclusion of large bars and dance floors in many facilities. The current study aims to use the SDT framework to investigate how the experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack influence motivation.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Pelletier et al. (1995) identified three dimensions of intrinsic motivation, all of which contribute to self-determination. The first is the motivation to know, where satisfaction is gained from learning new things or skills. The second is motivation to accomplish, where individuals gain pleasure from improving on previously learned skills. The third is motivation to experience stimulation and pleasant sensations. The motivation to accomplish is tied to achievement motivation, which will be introduced later in this chapter (Nicholls, 1984)

Extrinsic motivation refers to activities that are either influenced by outside factors or carried out as a means to an end, rather than being carried out for their own sake. Deci and Ryan (1991) identified four dimensions of extrinsic motivation. The first dimension is referred to as integrated regulation, which is the most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. Integrated regulation refers to behaviors that are performed out of choice, often to satisfy an overarching goal. Thus, the behavior is not intrinsically and directly motivated, but motivated indirectly.

The second dimension of extrinsic motivation is identified regulation. Identified regulation is similar to integrated regulation in that the behavior is highly valued and performed out of choice, but the behavior is limited to one particular activity. For example, one may have an overarching goal of achieving cardiovascular fitness, but due to weather concerns, a stationary bike in someone's basement is the only activity available to pursue that overarching goal.

The third dimension of extrinsic motivation is introjected motivation. Introjected motivation comes from a place of social pressure and avoidance of guilt. Introjected motivation relates to social motivation orientation, which will be introduced later in this chapter and was integrated throughout the current study (Allen, 2003, 2005). Finally, external regulation is a behavior that is regulated from an external place, such as rewards, constraints, or being told to perform an activity.

As shown above, some forms of extrinsic motivation can be self-motivated and some are not. These are important factors to consider when investigating the motivations of people participating in a recreational activity. Certainly, people can be purely intrinsically motivated as well, which research shows leads to higher levels of motivation, persistence, and intention to revisit or repurchase (Han & Hwang, 2014; Huang & Hsu, 2009). The current study aims to investigate motivational factors of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants, and expects to find a wide array of motivational profiles due to Topgolf and Drive Shack's multi-faceted experience, which caters to dedicated golfers, casual golfers, and nongolfers alike.

Self-Determination Theory in Sport

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), social environments that allow satisfaction of psychological needs are thought to promote situations in which personal development and the quality of the experiences are optimized. However, these outcomes are only possible if the social context offers certain conditions such as choice, empathy and a personally meaningful rationale for engaging in activities (Lloyd & Little, 2010). The literature suggests that leisure contexts can provide similar conditions such as social support and leisure-generated self-determination, and therefore have the potential to enhance psychological well-being.

In their study of how women's psychological well-being is influenced by leisure-time physical activity, Lloyd and Little (2010) found in in-depth interviews of 20 women that physical activity can have a positive effect on well-being. The positive effect of physical activity found in Lloyd and Little's study was primarily attributed to contexts that supported the essential parts of self-determination: competence, autonomy, and relatedness (p. 369). Not coincidentally, SDT, according to the authors, was legitimized in this study because many of the key components to the theory were explained through the participants' own words.

Chatzisarantis and Hagger (2007) used SDT to investigate the effects of sport participation on psychological well-being among both competitive and recreational sport participants. The researchers surveyed 118 university students on topics ranging from life aspirations to the types and seriousness of sport participation. The researchers found that recreational athletes showed a preference for intrinsic life aspirations, as opposed to competitive athletes, who were more extrinsically motivated. Also, recreational athletes showed higher levels of psychological well-being. The authors conclude that "the moral worth of sport does not reside so much in the frequency in which individuals engage in the sport, but in the goals and values people express through sport participation" (p. 1047).

Many of the SDT components discussed in the studies cited above, such as social autonomy, competence, and intrinsic motivation, can be related to participation in the game of golf. It can be argued that Topgolf and Drive Shack, through thoughtful design of their environment, has aimed to satisfy the primary needs identified in SDT.

In their review of developments in SDT, Vallerand et al. (2008) noted that the environment plays a fundamental role as a determinant of motivation. More specifically, "…it is not the environment per se that matters, but rather what it means functionally in terms of supporting people's psychological needs. Thus, to the extent that the environment allows one to experience feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness, the person's motivation toward a given task will be optimal" (p. 257). The current study will investigate whether or not Topgolf and Drive Shack provide benefits to customers through the built environment, and if so, how.

Achievement Goal Theory

One of the primary motivators in many realms of life such as academics, work, and sport is achievement. Nicholls (1984) stated "Achievement behavior is defined as behavior in which the goal is to develop or demonstrate - to self or to others - high ability, or to avoid demonstrating low ability" in achievement settings (p. 328).

Achievement goal theory traces peoples' behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in achievement situations to the broad goals they pursue in that activity (Hulleman & Senko, 2010). Within achievement scenarios, two categories of goals have been established in the literature: mastery goals and performance goals.

Mastery goals contain self-referential standards, where the individual measures performance based on personal objectives, such as learning goals. Performance goals are otherwise known as ego or ability validation goals, where people measure themselves against

others, as well as against success or failure. These two categories help researchers identify whether individuals are motivated more intrinsically or more extrinsically in achievement situations, such as in sport.

Using this mastery versus performance framework, people can be categorized as task oriented or ego oriented. Task oriented people seek to improve ability, judging themselves based on self-provided criteria. Duda (1989) found that high task orientation, or a focus on improving one's ability and self-determined criteria, is related to pro-social views of the role of sport. This may be a contributing motivational factor in such a social setting as Topgolf and Drive Shack.

Ego oriented individuals seek to be the best and to outperform others. This type of categorization has been used in achievement-related research, including in the realm of sport. According to Hodge, Allen, and Smellie, "…considerable research supports the use of achievement goal theory to examine levels of intrinsic motivation in sport" (2008, p. 159).

Achievement Goal Theory has been closely tied with Self-Determination Theory since its development. Ntoumanis (2001) studied the links between the key constructs of these two theories. The author states that both theoretical and empirical evidence shows that both task and ego goal orientation are linked to different types of motivation (p. 400). Specifically, ego orientation has been shown to undermine autonomy, forcing the individual to focus externally. In contrast, those with a high task orientation are more intrinsically motivated, and therefore focus less on the outcome of the activity and more on the activity itself (p. 400). Duda and Nicholls (1992) argued that in sport, when individuals are more task-oriented, they are able to control evaluative criteria, and thus, the criteria are more achievable. One may postulate that an activity or sport with a strong social component would lend itself to those individuals with high task orientation.

Ntoumanis (2001) investigated task and ego orientations and their relationships with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, among other factors. The author also studied the role of

perceived competence within both theories. He found that task orientation positively predicted intrinsic motivation (p. 405). As hypothesized, task orientation did not predict external regulation of motivation, showing that task-oriented individuals focus more on self-regulated motivations. Also as hypothesized, ego orientation positively predicted introjected and external regulation of motivation, showing that extrinsic factors strongly motivate ego-oriented individuals.

Ntoumanis (2001) suggested that future research "should examine empirical links between the two motivational theories using participants with more diverse competitive standards (than those used in this study) or from other physical activity contexts… In this way, variations in perceived competence will be greater than in the present study and, therefore, the interplay of goal orientations and perceived competence should be more evident" (p. 408). The current study, while not investigating perceived competence, does take into account participants' skill level and experience with golf (i.e. "golfographics"), and investigates the interactions between golfographics and goal orientations.

In a review of Achievement Goal Theory, Roberts (2012) generally found that research has expanded and diversified, especially within sport, using this framework. Most research has investigated the roles of task and ego goal orientations and their effects on motivation. Roberts found that task orientation, or a focus on mastery of a skill, is more likely to increase perceived competence, which results in higher enjoyment, satisfaction, and interest (p. 22). The author also mentioned that "Dispositional and contextual determinants (of motivation) have been investigated independently (but) they should be considered interactive constructs", which should be investigated further (p. 2).

Achievement goal theory has not been widely used in the golf context. It has been used to investigate whether achievement goals predict positive and negative emotions in golf (Dewar & Kavussanu, 2011). The researchers found that task-oriented motivation positively predicted happiness and excitement, especially when athletes performed well. While this study will use

achievement goal theory in a different manner, it is encouraging to see work being done in this field to measure task-oriented and ego-oriented motivation in golf.

The National Golf Foundation found that Topgolf and Drive Shack are cultivating a wide-ranging customer base ranging in terms of age, gender, and golf experience and ability (Lombardo, 2018). With such a diverse customer base, it is possible with this population to study the impact of past experience and perceived competence on goal orientations and motivation. The current study examines how past experience and skill level in golf impact task and ego goal-oriented motivation.

Social Motivational Orientation

Topgolf and Drive Shack are considered by many to be facilitating as much of a social endeavor as a sport endeavor, if not more so. Therefore, it will be important to measure participants' social motivations for participating in Topgolf and Drive Shack in order to more accurately understand people's overall motivation.

Allen (2003) stated that while much of the early motivation research in sport employed SDT and Achievement Goal Theory, most studies had largely omitted the social factors that contribute to motivation, stating that there was an "incomplete picture of youth sport motivation" (p. 552). She worked toward a fuller understanding of the contribution of social factors to overall motivation, focusing on social motivation in youth sport. The study informed the development of the Social Motivational Orientations Scale for Sport (SMOSS), which has since been used in both youth and adult sport research (Hodge et al., 2008).

The goal of the Allen (2003) study was to examine the contributions that social goal orientations and perceptions of belonging make toward understanding youth sport motivation. According to Allen, "Sport clearly has meaning to participants because it provides opportunities

for interpersonal interaction and the development of social bonds with significant others" (p. 551).

To measure social motivation of youth in sport, Allen developed the SMOSS framework based on the belief that the "central energizer of motivation (or goal of action) in a social context such as sport is the desire to develop, maintain, and demonstrate social bonds or connections with others" (Hodge, et al., 2008, p. 160 from Allen, 2003). Allen (2003, 2005) identified and empirically tested three overarching social motivation orientations. The first is an affiliation orientation, in which an individual's primary concern is to develop and maintain mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships. The second is a social status orientation in which the individual is motivated by a "see and be seen" mentality. The third is a social recognition orientation, a motivation that is driven from a desire to be recognized for one's participation by others. She found in her study of 100 female adolescents that these three social orientation profiles were significant contributors to overall motivation to participate in sports.

This scale has been further refined and empirically tested, however much of the research using this scale has been conducted in the realm of youth sport. There is a clear opportunity to utilize this scale with adults in a sport setting, which is ideal for the current study.

Achievement Goals, Social Orientations, and SDT Together

To gain a full understanding of the motivation of participants at Topgolf and Drive Shack, the current study proposes the use of all three motivation frameworks described above. This combination of theories and frameworks is proposed because Topgolf and Drive Shack have created unique experience environments that offer both social and sport endeavors. In order to fully understand motivation, both achievement and social motivations must be considered.

Framing the study broadly by looking at the satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness is the first step in understanding Topgolf and Drive Shack participants. Further, there will be customers of varying experience in golf, which may lead to different achievement orientations. Finally, it is expected that customers will show differing social motivation orientations, which justifies the use of the Nicholls' social motivation model.

While this exact combination of frameworks has not been done before, Hodge et al. (2008) performed a study that had a similar goal of achieving a richer understanding of motivation in sport. They studied the relationships between achievement goal profiles, social goal orientations, and overall motivational profiles in Masters sport, with a broad sample ranging from 29 to 77 years of age and specializing in multiple sports. The study included golfers, as well.

Hodge et al. (2008) argued that SDT could be used to frame the three social motivation orientations identified by Allen (2003, i.e. social affiliation, social status, and social recognition), as well as the two achievement goal profiles of task (mastery) and ego (achievement) proposed by Nicholls (1984). They designed the study because they felt that Masters sport participants were not solely motivated by achievement, but that social factors played a role in overall motivation, as well.

Regarding social orientation, Hodge et al. (2008) postulated that an affiliation orientation is more intrinsically motivated, whereas the social status and recognition orientations are often extrinsically motivated. They were also interested in investigating the claim from previous motivation research (Deci & Ryan, 1985) that relatedness contributes less to intrinsic motivation than the other two factors of SDT: autonomy and competence.

The researchers employed a cluster analysis to determine if distinct groups would emerge when measuring for the two achievement goal orientations and the three social motivation orientations. They found five clusters of combined goal orientation profiles in total (Hodge et al., 2008, p. 167). In their sample, they found that most athletes were affiliation-oriented, which is the

most intrinsically oriented social motivation. They also found high intrinsic motivation in regards to achievement profiles, with most respondents showing a task orientation (rather than an ego orientation). They concluded that their findings "may not have been evident if achievement and social goals had been examined separately" (p. 173).

Wayment and Walters (2017) used the achievement goal framework to investigate the importance of social connectedness in college athletes. While the study did not use Allen's social motivation framework, the researchers did investigate the ability of interpersonal connectedness to mediate the relationship between task and ego goal orientations and well-being (p. 2114). They used the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ, Duda, 1989), which was used in the current study, to measure task and ego motivation. These measures were used to predict psychological well-being as mediated by a measure they called "athletic social connectedness" (p. 2118). Among other results, the researchers found evidence that task-oriented motivation positively influences psychological well-being. They also found that "ego motivation in athletics negatively impacts a sense of athletic connectedness", or social outcomes (p. 2119). The current study aimed to investigate similar relationships between achievement and social motivations.

The concept of investigating motivation by combining multiple frameworks to include areas of motivation often researched independently is an important next step in the field. The current study will advance this area with a new population and activity that uniquely offers an athletic activity in a purposefully social setting.

Concluding Thoughts

The literature reviewed above introduced the reader to concepts of the Experience Economy framework. This framework describes the components of an experience that leaves a

strong impression on customers. As a result of a well thought out design at Topgolf and Drive Shack, the companies have seen unprecedented participation numbers in recent years and continues to expand (Lombardo, 2018). They are clearly employing many of the experience design features laid out by the experience economy framework.

Self-Determination Theory was introduced as the overarching social psychological framework of the current study. Research shows that self-determined behavior is strongest when individuals are intrinsically motivated (Deci & Ryan, 1987). Achievement goal theory and social motivational orientation theory were introduced as two ways to measure motivation and identify intrinsic and extrinsic motivation orientations. Using these two SDT sub-theories enabled this study to more fully evaluate the achievement and social motivations of Topgolf and Drive Shack customers, which will enhance understanding of the intersection of sport and socialization.

Figure 2-1 is a visual representation of the study, showing the interactions of the theories and frameworks described above.
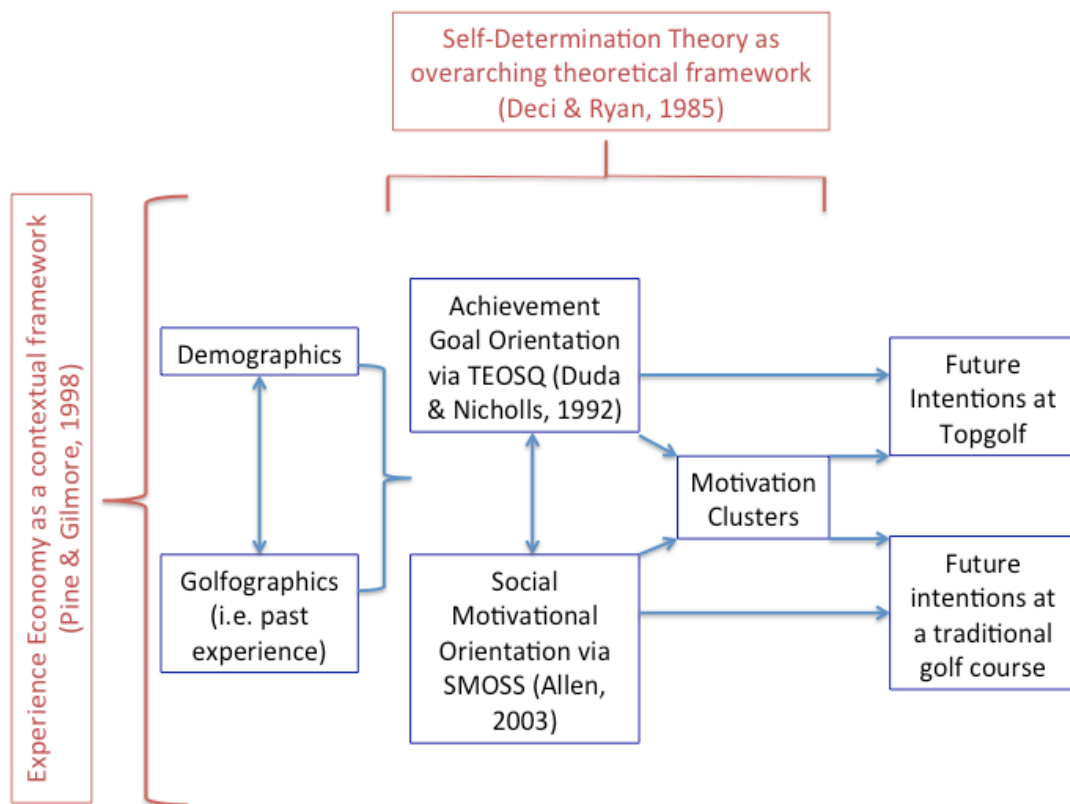
Figure **2-1**: Theoretical Model for Current Study.

Chapter 3

Methods

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methods used in this dissertation and is divided into four sections. The introduction section revisits the study's research aims, restates the research questions, and describes Topgolf and Drive Shack and explains why these companies offer an appropriate model to investigate for the current study. The second section provides a description of the study sample and data collection procedures for both phases. The third section discusses the survey instrumentation items and constructs and gives a brief background of the pre-existing instruments that were used. The fourth section describes steps taken for data management and analysis.

Purpose of the Study Revisited

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors relating to dedicated golfers' participation in golf, specifically at golf alternative activities. The study aimed to investigate dedicated golfers' motivation to participate in a multifunctional golf experience like those offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Furthermore, the study aimed to investigate factors relating to future participation intentions both at Topgolf and Drive Shack and in traditional golf settings, and the role that motivation profiles play in those intentions. The study aimed to investigate "golfographics" (Petrick, 2002, p. 336), or involvement and skill level in golf, of Topgolf and

Drive Shack participants to aid in more fully understanding the different sub-groups who

patronize the facilities.

Research Questions Revisited

The research questions are again presented below to assist the reader while navigating

this chapter.

R^1: What are the experience use history and demographic profiles of dedicated golfers who have visited Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^2: What are dedicated golfers' motivations for visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2a}: What are dedicated golfers' achievement goal orientations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2b}: What are dedicated golfers' social motivations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{2c}: What is the relationship among Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' demographics, experience use history, achievement goal orientations, and social motivations?

R^3: What are dedicated golfers' future golf intentions, both at nontraditional golf experiences and at traditional golf courses, after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^{3a}: What is the relationship among demographics, experience use history, future intentions, and motivations?

R^4: What are the differences between private-access and public-access golfers' motivations to visit Topgolf and Drive Shack?

R^{4a}: How do these differences influence future intentions for participation at Topgolf/Drive Shack and at traditional golf, if at all?

Mixed Methods Approach

This study was completed in two phases in a mixed methods approach. Phase One was

comprised of an online survey, and Phase Two included interviews with subjects from the same

sample. Research methods experts have advocated for mixed methods research for decades (Creswell, 1994; Greene et al., 1989; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie presented mixed methods research as a "third paradigm", one that can bridge the historical disputes of the merits and limitations of quantitative and qualitative research, allowing for researchers to use multiple methodologies to complement and support each other in a study (p. 14-15).

Greene et al. (1989) proposed a conceptual framework in which they identified five purposes for conducting mixed methods research, all of which are relevant to the present study. These purposes are triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion (p. 255). They state "…triangulation refers to the designed use of multiple methods, with offsetting or counteracting biases, in investigations of the same phenomenon in order to strengthen the validity of inquiry results" (p. 256). Therefore, using mixed methods acknowledges built-in biases and limitations in research methods and works to offset said biases and limitations by comparing results from differing methods, thus increasing the validity of a study. The current research was designed to enable triangulation through the use of mixed methods. Evidence of triangulation is found in the study's results, provided in Chapter 4.

Complementarity refers to elaborating or clarifying results from one method with findings from another method. This was one of the primary reasons that a mixed methodology was chosen for this study. The results from Phase One were clarified and elaborated upon considerably by employing qualitative methods in Phase Two.

According to Greene et al. (1989), mixed methods can be used in development, "where the first method is used to help inform the development of the second" (p. 260). This study used findings from Phase One to develop the interview structure and questions for Phase Two. Using the results from Phase One to design Phase Two undoubtedly led to more insightful findings through qualitative research.

The benefit of "initiation" is that researchers can further explore unexpected outcomes (Greene et al., 1989, p. 257). One such unexpected outcome, which will be discussed at length, occurred when the researcher found differences in motivations and future intentions about Topgolf and Drive Shack based on whether golfers have private club memberships or access their traditional golf via public facilities.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this study used mixed methods to expand the breadth and depth of findings by employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. This was achieved through meaningful conversations with seven members of the original sample, and the expanded findings are important to the conclusions of this study.

Topgolf and Drive Shack

Topgolf and Drive Shack were introduced in Chapter 1. The introduction included a history of both companies, a survey of the current state of both businesses, and a glimpse at future offerings, including new products. These companies were chosen because they are leaders in the golf-alternative space, offering engaging, exciting, and socially-focused golf driving range experiences. This model is relatively new to the golf industry, and the industry has witnessed a substantial growth in off-course golf participation because of these opportunities (Beditz, 2021; Lombardo, 2018).

This study targeted golfers in the United States who have visited a Topgolf or Drive Shack venue in the previous twelve months. These venues continue to make improvements and enhancements, so it was important to capture user experiences from recent visits. Data collection for this study began in March 2021, approximately one year after the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic and after both companies had reopened to the public after varying lengths of shutdowns for COVID-19 purposes.

Study Sample and Data Collection Procedures

Phase One - Questionnaire

The questionnaire was pilot tested in January and February of 2021 ($n = 54$) and as a result of data analysis and committee consultation, minor revisions were made to improve the questionnaire. First, the pilot survey allowed open-ended responses to the question "Why did you go to Topgolf and/or Drive Shack?". Using the responses, a new multiple-choice question was formed using the six most common responses and allowing participants to choose "other" and provide an open-ended response.

The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (Duda & Nicholls, 1992, TEOSQ), which is presented and described below, was altered, removing questions about "work avoidance" and "cooperation" that had been used in a previous study but did not apply to this study.

The future intentions scales, the TEOSQ, and the Social Motivation Orientations Scale for Sport (Allen, 2003, 2005, SMOSS) were in five-point Likert scale format, but listed in different order. The scales were altered to have the same response option order, in which 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*). This was done to avoid confusion among participants.

We found some instances of participants who answered the same response on the scales for all items. Researchers have found that "Unfortunately, not all of the data that respondents produce are generated consciously and, therefore, not all data are valid. Some individuals, for example, purposefully distort their responses to be perceived more positively (social desirability) or negatively than they really are" (Marjanovic et al., 2014, p. 1). While there was no evidence in the pilot of individuals responding with the intent of their responses being more socially desirable, the presence of some responses being the same across both scales suggested a desire to move quickly through the survey, rather than attempt to accurately respond to each item. Using

the tool developed by these researchers, an item was embedded into each motivation instrument to ensure that participants were conscientiously responding. Using results from these two items, any responses that failed to answer both questions correctly were eliminated from the final sample.

Two new items were added to the official survey. First, respondents were asked if they access golf via a private club membership or via public access. This came from a desire to determine if private club members measure differently in terms of motivation and future intentions than public-access golfers. A second item was added to ask respondents in the official study to indicate interest in participating in a follow-up interview. Due to these instrumentation changes, data from the pilot sample were excluded from the final analysis.

The study to employed a mix of purposive and convenience sampling techniques using golf industry professionals to recruit subjects, leveraging the researcher's professional network through the Penn State PGA Golf Management program. For recruitment purposes, the researcher strategically chose Penn State PGA Golf Management program graduates because they have access to a large population of golfers who likely have visited a Topgolf and/or a Drive Shack.

Purposive sampling occurs when "researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population" (Lune & Berg, 2012, p. 39). Convenience sampling, on the other hand, "relies on available subjects – those who are close at hand or easily accessible" (p. 38).

In March 2021, 233 Penn State PGA Golf Management program alumni who work at golf facilities were sent an invitation to forward the survey to their membership, customer database, or for those who teach golf, to their students. The survey was then sent to all who indicated a willingness to assist in the study. Of those alumni, a total of nine indicated to the researcher that the survey had been forwarded to their clients/customers.

Response rate could not be calculated because some alumni sent direct emails to members and customers while others posted an invitation to participate on social media channels with various follower counts. Those who were invited to participate were asked to complete an online questionnaire. A total of 296 individuals opened the survey, resulting in 210 surveys of various completion percentages. Further elimination of incomplete surveys occurred, which is detailed below.

Of the final sample ($n = 135$), Topgolf participants represented 92.6% and Drive Shack participants represented 7.4% (see Table 3-1). It should be noted that respondents were asked to indicate which facility they visited *most recently*. Some respondents may have been to both facilities.

Table **3-1**: Topgolf and Drive Shack Participation.

Facility Name	*n*	%
Topgolf	125	92.6%
Drive Shack	10	7.4%

Phase Two - Interviews

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview to be hosted via Zoom videoconferencing. At the conclusion of quantitative data analysis, the researcher identified a need to interview participants based on how they access the game of golf, namely "public-access golfers" and "private member golfers".

This self-selected sampling technique resulted in ten potential participants, seven of whom responded to the formal request for an interview. Self-selection results when "…(study) respondents are allowed to decide entirely for themselves whether or not they want to participate in a (study)" (Lavrakas, 2008, p. 808). The researcher intended to interview an equal number of

public-access golfers and private member golfers. In total, three public-access golfers and three private member golfers were interviewed. In addition, one golfer who was previously a long-time private club member but now plays public golf participated. Bernard et al. (2017) refer to this sampling technique as "quota sampling" (p. 46-47), in which the researcher decides on a subpopulation of interest and the proportions of those populations in the sample. While quota sampling was not intentionally conducted in this manner for the current study, the self-selected sampling technique resulted in an even number of participants from both populations, matching the percentage of public versus private access golfers in the sample from Phase One.

Instrumentation

Phase One - Questionnaire

This dissertation examined what types of motivation exist for individuals who participate in experiences offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack. It also examined participants' self-reported experience use history in golf, which is referred to as "golfographics" throughout the study and is described in more detail in Chapter 4. Finally, the study examined future participation intentions, both at Topgolf/Drive Shack and at traditional golf courses.

Achievement Goal Theory

Duda and Nicholls (1992) created the original Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) to measure one's task versus ego orientation in both the sport and classroom settings. It specifically asks participants about how one measures success (p. 292). Eight task-oriented items focus on task mastery, learning, and effort. Eight ego-oriented items

focus on outperforming others and the demonstration of ability levels superior to one's peers. The original scale included two items measuring "cooperation" and three items measuring "work avoidance". These items were removed for the current study because, in their meta-analysis of the study of achievement goals in physical activity, Ntoumanis and Biddle (1999) found that 90% of studies that had employed the TEOSQ only used the task and ego subscales, especially when the cooperation and work avoidance items did not apply to the study (p. 316). This was the case in the current study.

The TEOSQ has been used extensively in sport research and has been shown to be a valid and reliable scale in a variety of samples (Hodge et al., 2008). All items in this scale are measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale rating from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

The reliability of the task subscale and the ego subscale in the present sample were assessed by analyzing their internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. Vaske (2008) states: "By convention, an alpha of .65 to .70 is often considered to be an 'adequate' scale in parks, recreation, and human dimensions research. Some researchers require a cut-off of 0.80 for a 'good scale', while others are as lenient as 0.60" (p. 518). In this study, the task subscale had a reliability of .94 and the ego subscale had a reliability of 0.90.

Table **3-2**: Instrumentation Items Within the TEOSQ Construct.

Task-orientation items
1.   I can keep practicing hard.
2.   I work really hard.
3.   I learn a new skill by trying hard.
4.   Something I learn makes me want to practice more.
5.   I get the knack of doing a new skill.
6.   A skill I learn really feels right.
7.   I do something I couldn't do before.
8.   I do my very best.

Ego-orientation items
1.   Others can't do as well as me.
2.   I do better than my friends.
3.   I beat the others.
4.   I'm more skilled than other people.
5.   Others mess up and I don't.
6.   I'm the only one who can do the skill.
7.   I'm the best.
8.   I have the highest score

Note. Item prompt began with "I feel really successful at Drive Shack or Topgolf when…"
Note. All measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)

Social Motivation Orientation Theory

Allen (2003, 2005) developed the Social Motivational Orientations Scale for Sport (SMOSS), allowing researchers to measure participants' degree of social status orientation (four items), social recognition orientation (four items), and social affiliation orientation (seven items) in sport (from Hodge et al., 2008, p. 163). The scale was modified to include verbiage that specifies the Topgolf and Drive Shack setting. For example, to measure social recognition orientation, one item read: "Other people think I am really good at *golf*".

All items are measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale rating from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The validity and reliability of the SMOSS has been examined and found to be acceptable in many studies (Allen 2003, 2005; Hodge et al., 2008). In this study, the affiliation

subscale had a reliability of 0.75, the social status subscale had a reliability of 0.75, and the social

recognition subscale had a reliability of 0.79.

Table **3-3**: Instrumentation Items Within the SMOSS Construct.

Social status orientation items
1. I belong to the popular group at Drive Shack or Topgolf.
2. I am the center of attention.
3. I am part of the "in" crowd.
4. I am one of the more popular people.
Social recognition orientation items
1. Others tell me I have performed well
2. Other people think I'm really good at golf.
3. I receive recognition from others for my accomplishments.
4. Others are impressed by my ability.
Social affiliation orientation items
1. I make some good friends.
2. My friends and I have a laugh together.
3. I make new friends who I socialize with outside of my time at Drive Shack or Topgolf.
4. I have fun with the others in my group.
5. Spending time with the other players is enjoyable.
6. I become friends with some of the others.
7. Just hanging out with the others is fun.

Note. Item prompt began with "I feel things have gone well at Drive Shack or Topgolf when…"
Note. All measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)

Demographics and Golfographics

Demographic variables and their implications can influence the motivations, perceptions,

and behavioral intentions of customers, especially in a sport and recreation setting (Petrick, 2002;

Petrick et al., 2001; Choi, 2016). Prior experience is also an important factor to consider when

studying the social and achievement motivations of customers in this field (Hodge et al., 2008).

Understanding consumer segmentation will greatly enhance the ability of service providers to

offer more customized and effective experiences in the future. More specifically, "distinctive

'golfographic' variables (e.g., mastery and frequency of playing golf) could also be considered

significant" in the current study (Choi, 2016, p. 6). In other words, one's experience with and

skill at golf might also influence the way participants respond to questions about motivation and future intentions. In the case of Topgolf and Drive Shack specifically, little is known to date of their customer base except demographic data that shows it is more diverse than traditional golf course customers (Lombardo, 2018). The current study aimed to gain a better understanding of Topgolf and Drive Shack customers, focusing on the sub-population of dedicated golfers who frequent the facilities.

The survey included a battery of items measuring demographic information. This information included age, gender, marital status, number of children in the household, race/ethnicity, education level, occupation, political orientation, and household income. Additionally, Topgolf and Drive Shack customers' golfographic data were collected, including how often they play at Topgolf and Drive Shack, how often they play at a traditional golf course, years of experience playing golf, and whether or not they have a golf course membership (Choi, 2016; Petrick, 2002; Petrick et al., 2001).

All demographic and golfographic items are provided in the survey instrument located in Appendix A.

Future Intentions

It is important to understand customer behavioral intention in business, especially in regards to intention to revisit and repurchase services (Lee et al., 2018). Combined with demographic data, golfographic data, and social and achievement motivation profiles, future intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack customers were important to investigate.

To measure future intentions, the study employed commonly used items to measure future intentions. Adapted from Jones and Suh (2000) and Han and Hwang (2014), the items asked the participant to indicate the probability that they would revisit Topgolf and Drive Shack

again in the future, whether they would visit a traditional golf course in the future, and finally, if

they already play traditional golf, if the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience encouraged them to

play more or less frequently in the future. These future intentions items were also informed by

existing substitutability literature, which aims to investigate one's willingness to substitute a

preferred activity with another (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Sutton & Oh, 2015; Vaske, 1980). The items

were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale rating from 1 (*extremely unlikely*) to 5 (*extremely*

likely).

Table **3-4**: Instrumentation Items to Measure Future Intentions

Future intentions at Drive Shack and Topgolf
1. If I were to participate in a golf alternative activity in the future, the likelihood of me returning to Drive Shack or Topgolf for that activity is…[a]
2. The likelihood that I would consider returning to Drive Shack or Topgolf again is…[a]
3. The likelihood that I would recommend Drive Shack or Topgolf to a friend is…[a]
4. The likelihood that I would never return to Drive Shack or Topgolf is…[a]
Future intentions at traditional golf courses for those who have previously played traditional golf
1. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am considering replacing some of my visits to traditional golf courses with visits to Drive Shack or Topgolf instead.[b]
2. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in playing **more** golf at traditional golf courses in the future.[b]
3. I consider Drive Shack or Topgolf and traditional golf to be different recreational activities.[b]
Future intentions at traditional golf courses for those who have not previously played traditional golf

1. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I played golf at a traditional course? [Yes or no]
    a. [if YES] How many times have you played at a traditional golf course since your last visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf?
    b. [if YES] How soon after your visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf did you play golf at a traditional golf course?

2. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in trying golf at a traditional golf course in the future.[b]
3. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in taking golf lessons in the future.[b]
4. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in becoming a regular golfer at traditional golf courses in the future.[b]

[a] 1 (*very low*) to 5 (*very high*)
[b] 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*)

Phase Two – Interviews

The study was designed to be mixed methods, employing interviews to add depth and understanding to the complex constructs of motivation and future intentions. The original intent was to use cluster analysis in phase one to categorize participants based on motivation profiles, and then to interview individuals from each cluster. As will be discussed in the results chapter of this dissertation, the cluster analysis primarily provided null results with no significant motivation differences between clusters. However, significant motivation differences existed between participants who access golf through public courses versus those who access golf through private club memberships. Because of this finding, a new research question was formed, which was presented as R^4 at the beginning of this chapter, that investigated differences between public-access and private-access golfers.

The interview guide was constructed using the same framework as was referenced in phase one of the study. In the opening, participants were asked to describe their experience in the game of golf, and their experience with Topgolf and/or Drive Shack (Petrick, 2002; Petrick et al., 2001).

Section two of the interview guide drew upon sport and social motivation literature (Allen, 2003, 2005; Duda, 1989; Duda & Nicholls, 1992; Hodge et al., 2008). This section asked participants their motivation behind visits to Topgolf and Drive Shack. Participants were asked to identify aspects of the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience that are preferred over traditional golf and vice versa. Then participants were asked to identify aspects of each experience that they would like to see integrated in the other setting.

The final section of the interview asked participants about future intentions at Topgolf/Drive Shack and at traditional golf (Han & Hwang, 2014). This section included questions about whether participants are currently or would consider substituting visits to Topgolf

and/or Drive Shack for traditional rounds of golf (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Sutton & Oh, 2015; Vaske, 1980). Participants were then asked if they would like to offer any additional thoughts before the conclusion of the interview. The entire interview guide is presented in the Appendix B. Interviewees were not provided questions in advance.

Data Analysis

Phase One – Questionnaire

Data were analyzed using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. The data analysis software is common in the social sciences. Data were cleaned and outliers removed from the database, detailed below. To address all research questions, descriptive statistics (e.g. frequencies, mean, min, max, and standard deviation) were calculated for all items and valid percentages were used. Pairwise deletion was employed for missing responses, allowing for the use of partially completed surveys.

A total of 296 individuals opened the survey. Many ($n = 86$) cases were immediately eliminated because they exited the survey before answering a question. The remaining 210 surveys were cleaned and analyzed. In total, 121 surveys were fully completed, including the last section of the survey, demographics. An additional fourteen surveys were retained from those who completed the survey through both the TEOSQ and SMOSS motivation constructs. Thus, a final count of ($n = 135$) surveys were analyzed.

Due to the sampling techniques detailed above, descriptive statistics of the sample focusing on demographic and golfographic information revealed that the sample was comprised of "dedicated golfers". This term was described and defined in Chapter 1.

According to Vaske, "Summated rating scales that combine multiple variables into a new index are commonly used in survey research" (2008, p. 285). The TEOSQ and SMOSS instruments contained such variables that address specific types of motivation. These groups of items were computed into summated rating scales, referred to as sub-scales in this study, allowing results to be presented as a summary of each sub-scale. The sub-scales were then converted to standardized z scores, allowing comparison of the variables. This approach was employed by Hodge et al. (2008) to allow the researchers to present the five sub-scales in direct comparison to each other as "high", "moderate", and "low" (p. 167).

Of particular interest to the researcher was whether or not Topgolf and Drive Shack customers clustered in terms of motivation profiles, and if so, how they clustered. This inquiry is reflected in the motivation-related research questions, R^2, R^{2a}, R^{2b}, and R^{2c}. Ntoumanis and Biddle (1999, in Roberts, 2012) used TEOSQ to obtain goal profiles from task and ego items in the instrument. Using a cluster analysis, they identified within-group similarities.

A similar analysis was conducted with these data, including data from both the TEOSQ and SMOSS instruments. Cluster analysis "…allocates objects or persons into groups (clusters) on the basis of their similarity, whereby the cluster should be internally homogenous, and externally as easy to distinguish from other clusters as possible. Unlike other statistical methods for classification, it makes no prior assumptions about differences in the population" (Ross, 2007, p. 16). Cluster analysis was chosen for this study for its ability to identify homogenous groups of respondents based on responses.

The current study used a two-stage clustering process (Ross, 2007), utilizing hierarchical methods to identify the number of clusters in the sample based on responses to the motivation-related items. Specifically, Ward's method was used to identify the number of clusters within the sample. Then, using the number of clusters identified using Ward's method, the non-hierarchical K-Means clustering procedure was used to confirm the cluster solutions. This procedure uses

principal component analysis, which transforms a large set of variables into a smaller one while containing as much data as possible from the original data set. This procedure allows researchers to graphically display findings like those presented in Figure 4.1.

One-way ANOVAs using Bonferroni correction were performed to investigate whether the independent variables of golfographics and demographics contributed to the cluster formation. The ANOVA results were used to then interpret the cluster analysis results to decide which solution was the best fit for this sample. Yim and Ramdeen (2015) argue that subject matter expertise is critical when interpreting cluster solutions. The researcher employed his knowledge of this subject to use the aforementioned statistical analyses to decide on the best solution for the current sample. These findings are detailed in Chapter 4.

To answer R^{2c} and R^{3a}, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were performed to explore the similarities and differences of the clusters based on demographics, golfographics, and future intentions. The .05 significance level was used in these analyses of variance.

The researcher found differences between private-access and public-access golfers in motivation profiles and in golfographic data. From this discovery, a fourth research question was added to further investigate similarities and differences between these two populations. Responses were recoded into the two categories of "private" and "public". A series of ANOVA tests were then performed to explore the similarities and differences of private-access and public-access golfers based on motivations, demographics, golfographics, and future intentions.

Phase Two – Interviews

Lune and Berg (2017) state "…all qualitative data, from interviews to fieldwork, need to be coded and analyzed in order to derive meaningful findings from them" (p. 181). Content must

be analyzed in a careful, detailed, and systematic way in an effort to "identify patterns, themes, assumptions, and meetings" (p. 182). This approach was employed when analyzing the interviews conducted for this study.

Interviews took place in September and October, 2021. All seven interviews were conducted on Zoom and lasted between thirty and forty minutes. Interviews were recorded and stored on the secure Penn State Zoom and Kaltura servers, accessible only by the primary researcher. The researcher used Zoom's auto-transcription tool. Transcripts were then reviewed and adjusted to minimize errors by the software program. The interviews were semi-structured, with pre-determined questions and room for expansion beyond standardized questions. The researcher added probing questions to allow interviewees to expand on responses. Probing questions, according to Lune and Berg (2017), "…encourage further elaboration, often by echoing back to the informant ideas that they have offered up themselves. Their central purpose is to elicit more information about whatever the respondent has already said in response to a question" (p. 74). This semi-structured approach allowed the researcher, who is a golf professional and has expansive knowledge of these activities, to engage the interviewees in more in-depth conversations related to the primary topics. This flexibility produced rich, personal thoughts and stories that may not have otherwise emerged.

According to Bernard et al. (2017) there are merits to both inductive and deductive research, and the approaches are often blended (p. 219-220). Phase Two of this study involved deductive research, which uses pre-existing theories and frameworks to form hypotheses and then test those hypotheses. Bernard et al. state "Deductive research is required in the confirmatory stage of any research project…" (p. 220). Because the interview guide for this study was based upon Phase One design and results and was formed using existing motivation-related theories and frameworks, it is deductive in nature.

The full interview guide is provided in Appendix B. The guide was structured to mirror the sequencing of the survey in Phase One. This structure allowed for inquiry related to each research question, starting with golfographics and demographics, then moving to motivation-related issues, and then to future intentions. This allowed for a deductive approach to thematic coding within each research question (Bernard et al., 2017). To describe the deductive thematic approach further, entering data analysis, the researcher had identified pre-existing themes and sub-themes that were generated from Phase One and from existing literature, theories, and empirical research. These themes and sub-themes were used to categorize responses from the interviewees. The categories guided comparisons among all interviews and aided in identifying takeaways and essential quotes. Tables 3-5 through 3-7 show each research question that was addressed in Phase Two, the theories that informed each question, and primary themes and sub-themes.

Table **3-5**: R^2 Deductive Coding Details

R^2 – What are dedicated golfers' motivations for visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?
R^{2a} – What are dedicated golfers' achievement goal orientations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?
R^{2b} – What are dedicated golfers' social motivations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?
R^{2c} – What is the relationship between Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' demographics, experience use history, achievement goal orientations, and social motivations?

Literature, Theory, or Framework	Reference(s)	Primary Theme(s)	Sub-Theme(s)
Self-Determination Theory	Deci & Ryan, 1985 Deci & Ryan, 1987	1. General Motivation	1a. Intrinsic motivation 1b. Extrinsic motivation 1c. Social motivation 1d. Achievement motivation
Intrinsic motivation	Pelletier et al., 1995 Han & Hwang, 2014 Huang & Hsu, 2009		
Extrinsic motivation	Deci & Ryan, 1991	2. Achievement Motivation	2a. Task-oriented 2b. Ego-oriented 2c. High-task and high-social
Achievement motivation	Duda, 1989 Hodge et al., 2008 Hulleman & Senko, 2010 Nicholls, 1984 Ntoumanis, 2001	3. Social Motivation	3a. Social status 3b. Social affiliation 3c. Social recognition
Social motivation	Allen, 2003, 2005 Hodge et al., 2008 Yoshida, 2017		

Table **3-6**: R^3 Deductive Coding Details

Literature, Theory, or Framework	Reference(s)	Primary Themes	Sub-Theme(s)

R^3 – What are dedicated golfers' future golf intentions, both at nontraditional golf experiences and at traditional golf courses, after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?
R^{3a} – What is the relationship between demographics, experience use history, future intentions, and motivations?

Literature, Theory, or Framework	Reference(s)	Primary Themes	Sub-Theme(s)
Leisure constraints	Godbey et al., 2010 Jackson, 2005	1. Substitution and replacement	1a. No intent to substitute 1b. Intent to substitute 1c. Do not see activities as the same
Substitutability and Substitution in Recreation/Golf	Choi et al., 1994 Iso-Ahola, 1986 Jun & Kyle, 2011a, 2011b Petrick et al., 2001 Sutton & Oh, 2015 Vaske, 1980	2. Repurchase and revisit	2. No sub-themes
Revisit and repurchase	Han & Hwang, 2014 Huang & Hsu, 2009	3. Influence of on future intentions	3a. Built environment 3b. Social needs satisfaction 3c. Substitution
Future intentions and motivation	Deci & Ryan, 1987 Hodge et al., 2008 Pelletier et al., 1995		3d. Influence of built environment on future intentions
Experience Economy and the built environment	Gibbs & Holloway, 2018 Hosany & Witham, 2010 Pine & Gilmore, 1998		3e. Excitement from experience
Future intentions and satisfaction	Asan & Emeksiz, 2018 Yoshida, 2017		

Table **3-7**: R[4] Deductive Coding Details

R[4] – What are the differences between private-access and public-access golfers' motivations to visit Topgolf and Drive Shack?
R[4a] – How do these differences influence future intentions for participation at Topgolf/Drive Shack and at traditional golf, if at all?

Literature, Theory, or Framework	Reference(s)	Primary Theme(s)	Sub-Theme(s)
Self-Determination Theory, Achievement Goal Orientation, Social Motivation Orientation	Allen, 2003, 2005 Deci & Ryan, 1985 Deci & Ryan, 1987 Duda, 1989 Hodge et al., 2008 Hulleman & Senko, 2010 Nicholls, 1984 Ntoumanis, 2001	1. Motivation 2. Future intentions	1a. Task higher in public golfers 1b. Affiliation highest social motivator for all interviewees 2a. More motivated after experience
Leisure constraints and substitution	Choi et al., 1994 Iso-Ahola, 1986 Jun & Kyle, 2011a, 2011b Petrick et al., 2001 Sutton & Oh, 2015 Vaske, 1980	3. The built environment	2b. Experience did not impact future intentions 2c. Substitution 3a. Setup 3b. Socialization enabled by built environment 3c. The role of customer service in experience
Future intentions	Asan & Emeksiz, 2018 Deci & Ryan, 1987 Hodge et al., 2008 Pelletier et al., 1995 Yoshida, 2017		
Experience Economy	Gibbs & Holloway, 2018 Hosany & Witham, 2010 Pine & Gilmore, 1998		

The questions that comprised the end of each interview did not directly address the research questions of the current study, but were of great interest to the researcher. The themes presented in Table 3-8 were discovered via inductive coding in which the researcher identified three primary themes, each with multiple sub-themes (Bernard et al. 2017).

Table **3-8**: Phase Two Further Takeaways

Further takeaways from Phase Two interviews that did not address existing research questions

Primary Themes	Sub-Themes
1. Topgolf/Drive Shack provide (traditional golf does not provide)	1a. Unique technology
	1b. Weather advantage
	1c. De-emphasis on skill (more inclusive)
2. Traditional golf provides (Topgolf/Drive Shack do not provide)	1d. Relaxed atmosphere
	2a. Variety
3. Diversity and inclusion	2b. Nature
	2c. Scoring system
	2d. Community (especially at private clubs)
	3a. Welcoming and lack of traditional stigma
	3b. Workforce diversity needed in traditional golf
	3c. Opportunity to capture more diverse population

Although there were numerous instances of thematic overlap throughout the coding process, the researcher did not reach theoretical saturation, as new information was gleaned with each interview. Theoretical saturation occurs "when no new information seems to emerge during coding, that is, when no new properties, dimensions, conditions, actions/interactions, or consequences are seen in the data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 136). Saunders et al. (2018) argue that "…saturation has differing relevance, and a different meaning, depending on the role of theory, the analytic approach adopted, and so forth, and thus may usefully serve different purposes for different types of research…" (p. 1904). In other words, according to Saunders et al., saturation is not a requirement of qualitative research, depending on the role of theory and the analytic approach. In the current study, the researcher did not strive for saturation, but rather to identify and confirm themes that were expected based on theory and results from Phase One.

Transcripts were analyzed and coded individually by the primary researcher. Ezzy (2002, in Saldaña, 2009) argues that in the absence of a research team, "coding solo" can be successful and recommends several strategies to ensure high quality data analysis in qualitative research (p. 28). Ezzy suggests checking one's interpretations with participants themselves, initially coding as interviews are taking place or during transcription, and maintaining a reflective journal. The

primary researcher for the current study coded during interviews and upon first review of

transcriptions, discussed interpretations and findings with interviewees, and maintained a master

code sheet as a way to centralize thoughts, observations, and themes. Through this process and by

employing a deductive approach to research that used existing theories and themes, the researcher

did not pursue a secondary coder, and therefore, did not establish inter-coder reliability.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings for the investigation of Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' experience use history (i.e. "golfographics"), motivations, and future intentions. The first purpose of this study was to examine achievement-oriented goal motivation and social motivation for going to a Topgolf or Drive Shack facility. The second purpose was to investigate how Topgolf and Drive Shack customers' experiences impacted their future intentions both at these facilities and at traditional golf courses. The author wanted to explore if golfers showed similar motivation profiles, and if so, how those clusters of golfers differed in terms of golfographics, demographics, and future intentions.

All quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. For confirmation when conducting cluster analyses, the author worked with a committee member on the R statistical computing software, version R-4.1.2.

The results of Phase One of this study are presented in the order of the research questions posed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. Phase One was conducted via an online questionnaire, described in Chapter 3. Appropriate tables representing descriptive data of the sample and statistical analyses are provided under each research question.

Phase Two of this study was conducted via videoconferencing one-on-one interviews with participants. While the primary purpose of the interviews was to learn more about the similarities and differences between private-access golfers and public-access golfers, as reflected in R^4, many responses also informed earlier research questions. Therefore, results from Phase Two are incorporated throughout.

Description of the Sample

Demographics

Phase One Sample

Of the 121 survey respondents who completed the demographic data section of the survey, 91% identified as male and 9% as female (see Table 4-1). The average age of respondents was 39.5. The oldest respondent was 77 and the youngest was 20. The majority of respondents (86.3%) identified as White/Caucasian. Other reported race and ethnicities were Asian, Asian American, Black/African American, Middle Eastern/North African, Native Hawaiian, and Spanish/Hispanic/Latino(a).

The sample was both well-educated and wealthy. Over 78% of respondents hold a four-year bachelor's degree or higher. Sixty-five percent of respondents indicated a household income of over $100,000, and only 6.6% have a household income of under $50,000.

Over 39% of respondents reported as single, and nearly 58% indicated being married or in a domestic partnership. The remainder were either widowed or divorced. Over 51% of the sample noted having children, many of whom indicated that during their most recent Topgolf/Drive Shack visit, children were with them (24.7%).

Politically, the sample was conservative-leaning. Twenty percent self-identified as either "extreme liberal", "very liberal", or "slightly liberal", 37% identified as "moderate", and 42.8% identified as either "slightly conservative", "very conservative", or "extreme conservative".

Over 68% of respondents indicated they last visited a Topgolf or Drive Shack near their home and 31.9% reported visiting a Topgolf or Drive Shack while on vacation. The mean group size that visited the facility was 6.1. It is important to note this group size, which indicates that

members of this sample go with groups larger than what is typically allowed at traditional golf

courses, which is capped at four players in a group.

Table **4-1**: Socio-Demographic Data for Phase One Sample.

Variable	*N*	% or *M (SD)*
Gender		
Male	110	91%
Female	11	9%
Average Age	135	39.5 years (15.6)
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	1	0.8%
Asian American	3	2.4%
Black/African American	3	2.4%
Middle Eastern/North African	1	0.8%
Native Hawaiian	1	0.8%
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino(a)	8	6.5%
White/Caucasian	107	86.3%
Household Income (data consolidated for space)		
Under $100,000	34	28.3%
$100,000-$199,999	45	37.5%
$200,000-299,999	13	10.8%
$300,000-$499,999	11	9.2%
$500,000 or more	9	7.5%
Don't Know	8	6.7%
Education Level (data consolidated for space)		
Associate's Degree or Lower	27	21.8%
4-Year Bachelor's Degree	59	47.6%
Master's Degree, Prof. Degree, or Doctorate	38	30.6%
Political Orientation (data consolidated for space)		
Extremely or very liberal	7	5.9%
Slightly liberal	17	14.3%
Moderate	44	37.0%
Slightly conservative	28	23.5%
Extremely or very conservative	23	19.3%
Distance Traveled from Home		
Visited while on vacation	38	31.9%
Visited in home area (mean miles traveled)	81	68.1% (25.5 miles)

Note. Percentages may not equal 100 because of rounding.

Phase Two Sample

Phase Two consisted of seven interviews with participants from Phase One who volunteered to participate in follow-up interviews. This sub-sample consisted of six males and one female. The six males were all White/Caucasian/European American and the female was Asian American. Three participants were public-access golfers, and three were private-access golfers. The seventh golfer was a long-time private club member but now accesses the game via public-access facilities. The sample varied in age and in various golfographic metrics (explained below), including golf ability and frequency of play. The participants will be referred to as "Golfer 1" through "Golfer 7". Golfers 1 through 3 are public-access golfers, Golfer 4 is the former private-club member, and Golfers 5 through 7 are private club members.

Golfer 1 is a white male in his early 30s who works in Boston, Massachusetts and is a skilled golfer with a handicap of 8. He works in technological sales and was married in November, 2021, just after his interview. Golfer 2 is a white male retiree living in Orlando, Florida and is an above-average golfer with a handicap of 18. He is married and has a large family with many grandchildren. Golfer 3 is a white male who earned a Master's degree in coaching, and works as a physical education teacher. He is in his early 30s and lives in northern New Jersey. He is an occasional golfer with a 25 handicap.

Golfer 4 is a former private club member who now accesses his golf via public access courses. He is a 31-year-old white male, lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is highly skilled, with a 0.2 handicap. He works for a signage company and has a Masters' degree.

Golfers 5, 6, and 7 all have memberships at private clubs. Golfer 5 is an Asian-American female in her mid-30s from the state of Washington and is an "occasional golfer" who enjoys the social opportunities the sport provides and does not keep an official handicap. She works in higher education and is married with two young children. Golfer 6 is a 34-year-old white male

from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and works in sales. He is the most skilled golfer of the Phase Two sample, with a handicap of "plus 4", meaning he breaks par regularly. He is married with two young children. Golfer 7 is a retired, white, 62-year-old male from Montgomery County, Maryland. He is married with two children and is a skilled golfer with a 6.4 handicap.

Experience Use History ("Golfographics")

"Past experience (EUH) can be defined as 'the sum of accumulated life experience one has within a particular recreation activity or style of participation'" (Petrick, 2002, p. 333). Understanding participants' accumulated life experience in an activity can be critical when studying a population in a recreation setting.

Petrick (2002) states "The segmentation of golf travellers into homogenous markets allows for the comparison of consumer variables by groups and can assist management in formulating consumer-oriented marketing strategies" (p. 332) Although he was writing about golf travel, this sentiment of knowing about a population's behaviors and experience within a given sport or activity can benefit researchers and practitioners alike. The current study adapted elements of Petrick's experience use history tool that was developed to categorize and label golfers based on responses about playing ability and how frequently one plays, among other variables. Petrick calls these data "golfographics", a term that is now commonly used in golf consumer research (Choi, 2016; Hennessey et al., 2008).

The golfographics section opened with questions about Topgolf and Drive Shack. Nearly 35% of the sample indicated that the most recent visit to Topgolf or Drive Shack was their first, indicating that the remaining 65.2% were repeat customers. The mean number of years respondents have been going to Topgolf and/or Drive Shack was 2.82. An overwhelming majority (92.6%) of the sample most recently went to Topgolf, which is logical considering the

significant market share the company holds, as discussed in Chapter 1. When asked "how many times have you been to Topgolf and/or Drive Shack in the previous year", the mean response was 5.09 times.

The responses in the next section asked about experience with traditional golf, and indicated that the sample consisted of experienced, highly skilled golfers. The current study describes these individuals as "dedicated golfers". Ninety-seven percent of respondents had played traditional golf prior to their visit to Topgolf/Drive Shack. Of those, 63.7% have been playing golf for at least ten years. These are active golfers, reporting an average of 45.14 18-hole rounds per year. Finally, the sample is highly skilled, with an average 18-hole score of 84.46. To give perspective, the National Golf Foundation cites that over two-thirds of golfers report consistently scoring over 90 (NGF, 2019). In a game where scoring 72 is considered to be an expert level, this sample is highly skilled. That same NGF report stated that 17% of golfers in the United States take golf lessons. This study's sample takes substantially more lessons, with 48.9% responding that they took at least one lesson from a certified professional in the past year.

Finally, participants were asked how they access traditional rounds of golf. The sample was split relatively evenly between those who have memberships (42.5%) and those who access the game via public venues (56.7%). One individual noted only playing while on vacation.

Motivations

The following section contains results from all motivation-related inquiries. Participants were asked to identify the reason for a visit to Topgolf or Drive Shack, and then answer questions related to achievement-oriented motivations and social motivations. Respondents were then grouped into clusters based on motivation profiles. Next, the clusters were analyzed to identify what factors contributed to the grouping of participants within each motivation profile cluster.

Reasons for Visiting

Descriptive statistics indicated that the majority of the sample went to Topgolf and Drive Shack for social reasons, including "to have fun" (44.4%), "for the combination of activity and food and/or alcohol" (34.1%), and "I was on a date" (2.2%). Others went for the opportunity to work on their golf skills, reporting "to practice my golf skills in a serious or focused manner" (3.7%) and "to practice golf, but in a fun, relaxing setting" (8.1%). Finally, and this was mentioned by some in Phase Two of the study, 4.4% went for a company or corporate outing.

Of the interviewees, five cited social engagement as the primary motivator for going to Topgolf and Drive Shack. Golfers 5 and 7 indicated that their motivation for going to these facilities depends on the occasion, and that they often enjoy the socialization but also work to improve their golf game. Said golfer 5, "The setup at Topgolf suits all types of occasions." Golfer 7 added, "The combination of fun, lunch, and beers is pretty great, but at the same time, the games allow you to work on your accuracy."

Achievement Goal Motivation Orientations

Achievement goal motivation orientations were investigated, where respondents answered a series of sixteen questions from the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ, Duda & Nicholls, 1992). Sub-scales within the TEOSQ measured task-oriented motivation ego-oriented motivation. Results from these items are provided in Table 4-2.

Table **4-2**: TEOSQ Subscale Scores for Phase One Sample.

Subscale	*n*	Reliability Score	*M (SD)*
Task-orientation subscale	135	.94	3.17 (1.01)
Ego-orientation subscale	135	.90	2.82 (0.94)

Note. All motivation subscale measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)Note. All motivation subscale

In Phase Two, only one golfer, Golfer 2, indicated that he goes to these facilities with a task-oriented motivation to work on improving his golf game. Two other participants, Golfers 3 and 7, indicated that they are motivated to work on their game when they go with certain groups or individually, and other times their motivation is socially-focused. Nobody indicated an ego-oriented motivation, where the motivation is to compete against others. Golfer 2 said, "The setup, especially the targets and the ball tracking, allows me to have a more focused practice session." Golfer 3 accredited the desire to work on one's game on the setup as well, saying, "If it was closer, I would utilize it more to work on my game. I could utilize the targets, games, and scores to track my progress."

Social Motivational Orientations

The study measured social motivations for going to Topgolf and Drive Shack, with respondents answering a series of fifteen questions from the Social Motivational Orientations Scale for Sport (SMOSS, Allen, 2003, 2005). Sub-scales within the SMOSS measured social status orientation, social recognition orientation, and social affiliation orientation. Results from these analyses are provided in Table 4-3.

Table **4-3**: SMOSS Subscale Scores for Phase One Sample.

Subscale	*n*	Reliability Score	*M (SD)*
Social affiliation subscale	132	.75	4.06 (0.58)
Social status subscale	131	.75	2.33 (0.84)
Social recognition subscale	132	.79	3.17 (0.81)

Note. All motivation subscale measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)

In Phase Two, the majority of the participants indicated that they were socially motivated to frequent Topgolf or Drive Shack. Of the three social orientations, none of the interviewees mentioned factors related to social status- and social recognition-oriented motivation. Instead, they all focused on social affiliation, where the main driver is building meaningful relationships with others (Allen, 2003). Golfers 2 and 7 went to be with and enjoy time with family. Golfers 1, 4, and 6 utilized the facilities to entertain clients and build relationships with those clients. Golfer 5 enjoyed a date with her husband, noting "I went to Topgolf while I was on my babymoon (in Salt Lake City) with my husband, and we had so much fun!" These results show that people do not necessarily go to Topgolf and Drive Shack for social status or recognition reasons, as might be seen at private golf clubs. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Motivation Clusters

A cluster analysis was used to examine the relationships between Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' demographics, golfographics, achievement goal orientations, and social motivations. Details about how the cluster analysis was conducted were provided in Chapter 3. Specifically, the researcher wanted to know if this sample of dedicated golfers could be classified into groups based on their motivation orientation scores. After identifying the best-fit solutions using hierarchical clustering methods, results for two- and four-cluster solutions were examined using a non-hierarchical K-Means clustering procedure. The two-cluster solution resulted in one

group scoring low in all motivation categories and the other scoring high in all motivation categories. According to Yim and Ramdeen (2015), it is important that the researcher have an understanding of the subject matter and the context of cluster solutions for proper interpretation. Based on the researcher's knowledge of golfer motivations and this sample, this solution was discarded because having one cluster scoring low in all motivation categories was deemed highly unlikely. When comparing the two-cluster solution results to the four-cluster results, it became clear that the four-cluster solution was the best fit for this sample.

Using K-Means cluster analysis with principal component analysis, data from the four-cluster solution are displayed in two dimensions in Figure 4-1. The x-axis represents dimension 1, which accounts for 24.5% of the variance of the data set and the y-axis represents dimension 2, which accounts for 15.6% of the variance of the data set. The solution resulted in four relatively balanced groups in terms of membership. This solution also provided groups that contrasted in provoking ways that area detailed below. A one-way ANOVA showed significant differences in all five sub-scales at the $p < .001$ level.
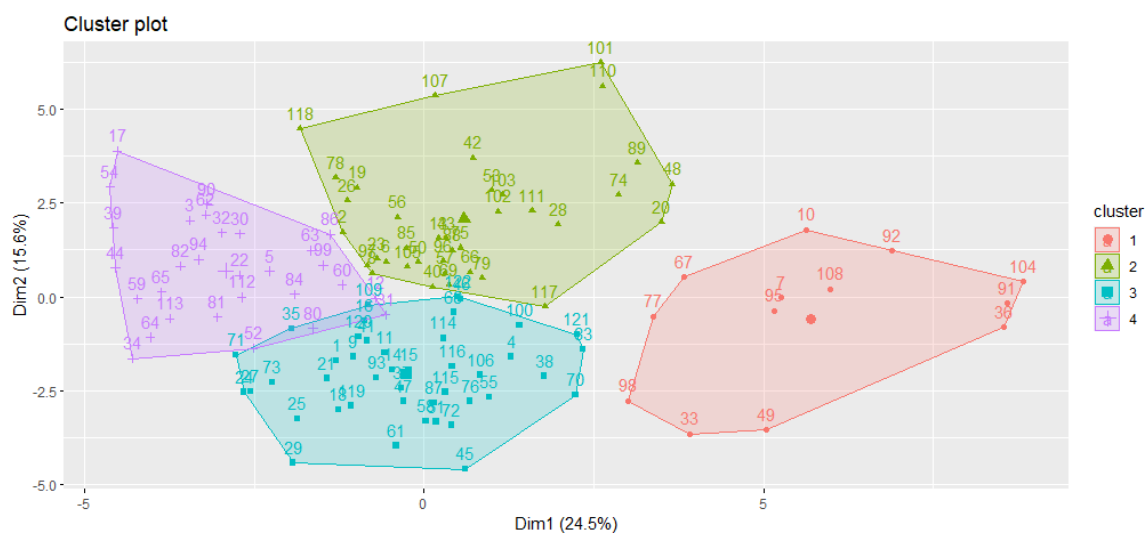

Figure **4-1**: Scatter Plot of K-Means Clustering Procedure for Four-Cluster Solution

Hodge et al. (2008) conducted a cluster analysis to examine motivation in sport. As a way to interpret cluster profiles, they standardized sub-scale means. In their study, "A *z* score of ± 0.5 was used as a criterion to interpret profile groups as high, moderate, or low on the five goal orientations (of task, ego, social status, social recognition, and social affiliation); that is, a *z* score above +0.5 was classified as high, a *z* score below +0.5 but above -0.5 was classified as moderate, and a *z* score below -0.5 was classified as low" (p. 167). This allowed the researchers to label groups relative to other groups. This same method was employed here. The reader is encouraged to examine both the relative differences of the clusters (i.e., *z* score and label) and the absolute differences (i.e., means and standard deviations); see Table 4-5. For this study, the goal profiles of dedicated golfers were labeled Clusters 1 through 4, and are described in Table 4-4.

Table **4-4**: Cluster goal profiles with relative motivation scores.

Cluster Number and Tag	*n*	Relative Ego Orientation	Relative Task Orientation	Relative Social Affiliation Orientation	Relative Social Recognition Orientation	Relative Social Status Orientation
Cluster 1, Hi-Mot	43	High	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate
Cluster 2, Lo-Mot	14	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Low
Cluster 3, Hi-Ego	24	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Cluster 4, Hi-Task	41	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Cluster 1 was comprised of golfers with high ego and social affiliation motivation moderate on task, social status, and social recognition. Because all measures were either moderate or high, the cluster was labeled high motivation (Hi-Mot). Cluster 2 members were moderate on social affiliation and low on all other measures, and thus labeled low motivation (Lo-Mot). Cluster 3 scored high on ego, moderate on social affiliation, social status, and social recognition, and low on task. The high ego motivation and, by contrast, low task motivation, resulted in a label of high ego (Hi-Ego). Finally, cluster 4 scored high on task, moderate on the social

measures, and low on ego. In terms of what the TEOSQ instrument measures, this cluster, labeled

high task (Hi-Task), was a direct contrast to cluster 3.

Table **4-5**: Descriptive Statistics for the Goal Profile Clusters

GP^	Cluster 1 (*n* = 43) Hi-Motivation			Cluster 2 (*n* = 14) Lo-Motivation			Cluster 3 (*n* = 24) Hi-Ego			Cluster 4 (*n* = 41) Hi-Task		
	z	*M*	SD	*z*	*M*	SD	*z*	*M*	SD	*z*	*M*	SD
TO*	0.48	3.68[a,b]	0.54	-1.36	1.77[a,c,d]	0.87	-.82	2.33[b,c,e]	0.70	.56	3.77[d,e]	0.57
EO*	0.71	3.48[a,b]	0.50	-1.41	1.46[a,c,d]	0.46	.84	3.60[c,e]	0.58	-.60	2.22[b,d,e]	0.40
SA*	0.52	4.36[a,b]	0.50	-.12	3.99	0.60	-.25	3.92[a]	0.50	-.04	4.03[b]	0.44
SR*	0.40	3.49[a]	0.75	-1.31	2.11[a,b,c]	0.86	.22	3.34[b]	0.56	0	3.16[c]	0.64
SS*	0.43	2.69[a]	0.72	-.92	1.55[a]	0.72	-.12	2.23	0.95	-.06	2.27[b]	0.72

Note. All motivation subscale measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)
^ Goal profile (GP) names abbreviated for spacing purposes. (TO = Task Orientation, EO = Ego Orientation, SA = Social Affiliation, SR = Social Recognition, SS = Social Status)
*Cluster motivation subscale means significantly different from each other (*p*<.001).
[a,b,c,d,e]Cluster pairs significantly different from each other (*p*<.05).

Cluster Comparisons

Once the four-cluster solution was deemed to be the most appropriate fit for this sample,

a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to investigate whether the

independent variables of golfographics and demographics contributed to cluster formation. As

described below, there were negligible differences between clusters.

There were no significant between-group differences in golfographics except between

clusters 3 (Hi-Ego) and 4 (Hi-Task) on the item asking how many golf lessons the participant

takes each year (sig 0.022). Members of cluster 3 ($M_{cluster3}$=3.13, SD=1.39) scored higher than

members of cluster 4 ($M_{cluster4}$=2.22, SD=1.19), indicating that the cluster with higher ego

motivation took more golf lessons per year than the group with a higher task motivation profile.

There were some notable differences in future intentions between people in different

clusters. All differences were between members of clusters 1(Hi-Mot) and 3 (Hi-Ego). When

asked if they would return to Topgolf or Drive Shack, members of clusters were significantly

different (p = 0.001), with members of cluster 1 ($M_{cluster1}$=4.79, SD=0.52) indicating a higher

likelihood than members of cluster 3 ($M_{cluster3}$=4.00, SD=1.09) to return. Members of cluster 1

($M_{cluster1}$=4.67, SD=0.57) were significantly (p = 0.007) more likely to recommend Topgolf or

Drive Shack to a friend than members of Cluster 3 ($M_{cluster3}$=4.00, SD=0.85). Finally, members of

cluster 1 indicated a significantly (p = 0.017) stronger interest in playing more traditional golf

after visiting a Topgolf or Drive Shack ($M_{cluster1}$=3.55, SD=1.01) than did members of cluster 3

($M_{cluster3}$=2.91, SD=1.20).

Chapter 5 includes discussion about the absence of meaningful significant differences in

demographics, golfographics, and future intentions for this four-cluster solution. These are

considered "null results" because members of the clusters are, in most analyses outside of

motivation orientations, statistically equal to each other (Landis et al., 2014, p. 163).

Future Intentions

A key focus of this study was to identify the future intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack

customers both in those golf alternative settings and in the traditional golf setting. The study

investigated potential effects of patronizing a Topgolf or Drive Shack on participants' future

intentions. Phase Two of the study provided some depth to this inquiry, where interviewees

identified specific ways in which the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience might influence a golfer's

future decisions.

Descriptive statistics indicated that after going to a Topgolf or Drive Shack, participants overwhelmingly indicated a desire to return, with 85.9% indicating they are either "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to return. Digging deeper, we asked participants, if they were to return to a "golf alternative activity" in the future such as Topgolf/Drive Shack, a driving range, or an indoor simulator, to indicate the likelihood that they would choose Topgolf or Drive Shack. Nearly 79% indicated they were either "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to choose Topgolf or Drive Shack for that golf alternative activity. Chapter 5 will suggest how future studies can investigate the preferences of the remaining 21.1% of the sample. The current industry trends indicate that golfers are becoming more and more interested in indoor simulators (Choi, 2016).

Word of mouth is an efficient and effective form of marketing (Petrick, 2002). Clearly the sample population enjoyed the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience, as 89.8% of people said they were either "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to recommend Drive Shack or Topgolf to a friend. Repeat business is also a part of sound business management (Peek, 2021). The sample population indicated a desire to return, with only 14.8% indicating they were "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to *never* return to a Drive Shack or Topgolf.

Future Intentions in Traditional Golf

Another aim of this study was to investigate the impacts of Topgolf and Drive Shack on future participation in traditional golf. When asked if participants are considering substituting some of their rounds of traditional golf with Topgolf or Drive Shack visits, 81.5% either "somewhat disagreed" or "strongly disagreed", indicating an *unwillingness* to replace traditional golf rounds with this alternative activity.

Of those interviewed, most said they have no intention to replace their traditional golf rounds with visits to Topgolf or Drive Shack. Golfers 2 and 6, however, had different opinions. Golfer 2 said that Topgolf has already replaced some of his traditional golf. Golfer 6 indicated that the setup at Topgolf is advantageous in certain situations, saying "I'll absolutely replace some golf with it if the weather is bad or if I'm short on time."

When asked if the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience influenced participants to play golf more often, 34.5% responded either "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree", showing evidence that the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience may influence some to play more golf.

Golfer 4 had strong opinions about the influence of Topgolf and Drive Shack on his future intentions with traditional golf. He said, "Yeah, you have fun at Topgolf and then you get the bug! It leaves me wanting to play more." Interestingly, all of the private club members said that the experience did not influence their desire one way or another to play more golf.

Most respondents either somewhat agreed (31.9%) or strongly agreed (52.9%) that the experiences provided at Topgolf and Drive Shack are "…different recreational activities" altogether. This shows that most of this sample of dedicated golfers view these activities as different, and do not compete or conflict with one another.

This sentiment was further investigated in Phase Two of the study. When asked if Topgolf or Drive Shack "satisfies your golf needs", most golfers stated that they see Topgolf/Drive Shack as wholly different recreational activities than traditional golf. Golfer 7 said, "No (it doesn't satisfy my golf needs), I'm a traditionalist. I love being on the course, on the grass, and enjoying the outdoors."

These results show that while participants enjoy the Topgolf and Drive Shack experiences, most do not see the activity as a replacement for traditional golf. In fact, many participants consider the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience to be entirely different from traditional golf. This notion was explored further in Phase Two, which is detailed at the end of this chapter.

Comparisons Between Public-Access and Private-Access Golfers

After the study identified significant differences in motivation between private-access (n = 57) and public-access golfers (n = 65), the researcher added a research question, R^4, to further investigate these differences. The researcher investigated motivational differences, differences in demographics and golfographics, and differences in future intentions. Results of these inquiries are provided below.

Motivational Comparisons

The two groups statistically differed in task orientation (p = 0.003) and in social affiliation motivation (p = 0.011). Public golfers rated significantly higher in task orientation (M_{public}=3.43, SD=0.90) than private-access golfers ($M_{private}$=2.89, SD=1.08), suggesting they place a higher priority on improving at a task, rather than competing against others. Results from one-way ANOVA comparing motivation measures public-access golfers to private-access golfers are provided in Table 4-6.

Table **4-6**: One-Way Analysis of Variance Comparing Access Method to Traditional Golf (i.e. Private vs. Public) and Motivation Measures

Motivation Measures	Private Mean (*SD*)	Public Mean (*SD*)	*F* Value
Task-orientation[a]	2.89 (1.08)	3.43 (0.90)	9.04**
Ego-orientation[a]	2.79 (1.01)	2.85 (0.91)	0.12
Social affiliation[a]	3.90 (0.65)	4.17 (0.49)	6.73*
Social recognition[a]	3.05 (0.82)	3.30 (0.76)	3.18
Social status[a]	2.23 (0.86)	2.36 (0.77)	0.77

*Significant at .05 level, **significant at .01 level
Note. For private-access respondents: n = 57, For public-access respondents: n = 65
[a]Note. All motivation subscale measures (1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)

Interviews added some context to this finding. Golfers 2 and 3, both public-access golfers, indicated that they see Topgolf and Drive Shack as a way to work on their golf games. Golfer 2 attributed his task-oriented motivation to the environment at Topgolf, stating "The setup,

especially the targets and the ball tracking, allows me to have a more focused practice session."
Golfer 3 said "If it was closer, I would utilize it more to work on my game. I could utilize the targets, games, and scores to track my progress."

Public golfers also rated significantly higher when measuring social affiliation motivation (M_{public}=4.17, SD=0.49) than their private-access counterparts ($M_{private}$=3.90, SD=0.65). This indicates that public golfers are more focused on developing and maintaining relationships through experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack.

In Phase Two, all golfers indicated that social affiliation was a strong motivator for going to Topgolf and Drive Shack. There were no differences between private-access and public-access golfers in this theme.

Demographic and Golfographic Comparisons

Next, demographic and golfographic information were examined to investigate whether these two populations differed in statistically significant ways. Some of the differences were related to differences found between motivation related to Topgolf and Drive Shack, while other differences were found in golf ability, experience, and future intentions both at traditional golf courses and at Topgolf and Drive Shack.

Many differences in demographic data were discovered within this sample. Private-access golfers in this sample were significantly ($p < 0.001$) older, averaging almost 50 years of age versus 31 years of age for the public golfer group. Nearly seventy-four percent of private-access golfers in this sample indicated an annual household income of $100,000 or more, compared to 57.9% among public golfers. Private-access golfers reported significantly different ($p = 0.006$) responses in the "employment status" prompt, reporting higher rates of self-employment and retirement than their public-access counterparts. Finally, family life is different

within this sample. Public-access golfers, who are younger in age, reported as 52.3% single, whereas more public-access golfers are married (77.2%). As might be expected because of age differences and marital status, private golfers reported having more children, as well.

The first significant golfographics finding was that public golfers indicated having been to Topgolf and/or Drive Shack more often than private-access golfers prior to their most recent visit ($p = 0.013$). While there were no significant differences in the questions asking about frequency of visits to Topgolf/Drive Shack, this finding indicates that public golfers in this sample have been frequenting these facilities longer and/or more often than private-access golfers.

Golfographics differed dramatically between the two groups. First, private-access golfers have played the game longer ($p < 0.001$). Eighty-two percent of private-access golfers indicated having played golf for 11 or more years, compared to just 51% of public golfers. Private golfers play nearly twice as many 18-hole rounds of traditional golf than public golfers. Private-access golfers are also significantly ($p = 0.033$) better at the game, with an average 18-hole score of 83.78 versus 85.99 among public golfers.

Private-access golfers indicated having taken more lessons ($p = 0.029$) than public golfers. Sixty percent of private golfers reported having taken a lesson in the past year, compared to 43% among public golfers.

Comparing Future Intentions

A potentially important finding of this study is that after having been to Topgolf or Drive Shack, public golfers indicated a stronger desire to play more traditional golf ($p = 0.004$). Over 49% of public golfers chose "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" when asked if the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience makes them want to play more traditional golf, compared to

18% among private golfers. While this was the only statistically significant finding in the future intentions items, it has potential for the golf industry, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

As reported above, Phase Two supported this finding. Golfers 1 and 4 both indicated a desire to play more traditional golf, whereas all three private club members stated that the experience at Topgolf and Drive Shack did not impact their desire to play traditional golf in either direction.

The earlier finding that indicated private-access golfers in this sample play approximately twice as many rounds of public-access golfers may have influenced responses to this question, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Further Takeaways from Phase Two

Phase Two offered an opportunity to learn more about the perceptions of the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience from the sample. While the findings presented below did not address the research questions directly, these conversations provided a much richer understanding of the topic.

The Built Environment

When asked about the built environment of Topgolf and Drive Shack, the golfers responded almost unanimously that the setup is one of the most appealing aspects of the facilities. One theme that emerged was that the golfers compared it to an arcade or bowling alley, with a combination of socialization and games. Golfer 4 said it is a "Perfect mix of an activity and socialization. There are TVs, it has the feel of a bowling alley."

Others praised the technology, including micro-chipped golf balls, ball flight monitors, and lit targets. Golfer 2 said, "The setup, especially the targets and the ball tracking, allows me to have a more focused practice session."

A final theme that was identified about the setup is that all golfers agreed the lounge-type setup in the bays allows for excellent socializing, networking, and entertaining. Golfers 1 and 6, in particular, use these facilities to entertain clients. Golfer 6, talking about this theme, said "Great customer service, personalized areas with couches, and food and drink makes it great. I was there entertaining clients, most of whom don't play golf, and it was still a huge success."

Comparing and Contrasting the Settings

The study aimed to know if Topgolf and Drive Shack provide something that these golfers felt lacked at traditional golf courses. Themes that emerged centered around technology, protection from weather, a de-emphasis on skill level, and the relaxed atmosphere. The last two themes mentioned allow for Topgolf and Drive Shack to be more inclusive, according to this sample. Golfer 4 said, "Topgolf has a very laid-back atmosphere. It's not stuffy, which allows a whole different group to enjoy the game." Golfer 6 agreed, saying that the setup "…knock(s) down the wall that keeps so many people out of golf."

Interviewees were then asked if traditional golf provides something that is not provided by Topgolf and Drive Shack. Four themes emerged, highlighting the variety that traditional golf provides, the opportunity to be in nature, the scoring system of traditional golf, and the community that one can find, especially at private clubs. Most respondents said that being in nature set traditional golf apart. Said Golfer 2, "When you play golf, you see beautiful settings and interact with the (real) grass and sand."

Diversity and Inclusion

Topgolf and Drive Shack are cultivating a more diverse customer base than that which is seen at traditional golf courses (Lombardo, 2018). As a final question of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to provide opinions about this diversification. It should be noted that the sample for Phase Two did not include much diversity outside of Golfer 5, an Asian-American woman. All interviewees were asked if they believe Topgolf and Drive Shack can serve as a gateway into the game of golf for those who haven't played before. The sample unanimously responded in the affirmative. Golfer 1 said that it "Allows you to just do it. It's very welcoming." Golfer 4 said, "Absolutely, it gets away from the stigma (of traditional golf)." Golfer 6 added that it "…knocks down barriers!"

They were then asked how the golf industry can capitalize on this trend and welcome a more diverse customer base into the game of golf. Suggestions varied. Golfer 2 said that "Older, white males work at courses. We need a more diverse workforce in golf." Golfer 4 saw a similar problem in the industry, saying that "I don't know if the industry *wants* to change." Golfer 3, who lives in Boston, saw an opportunity to bring people in during the cold winter season and then partner with local golf courses to bring that same population to the course during the warmer summer months. The discussions surrounding diversity and inclusion were both interesting and fruitful. Chapter 5 will provide takeaways and recommendations from these discussions for the golf industry.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter contains a discussion of the results and implications for the investigation of Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' experience use history (i.e. "golfographics), motivations, and future intentions. The chapter begins with a review of the study's research aims and questions, followed by a synopsis of key findings and contributions to both theory and practice. A lengthier discussion follows, with a focus on interpreting the results. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and recommendations for future research.

Few studies (Hodge et al., 2008; Méndez-Giménez et al., 2018) have examined the crossroads of achievement and social motivation in sport. This chapter will detail findings and important contributions to academic discourse, focusing on motivation in the fields of sport and recreation.

This was the first study to use achievement and social motivation theories to investigate Topgolf and Drive Shack participants. The study also investigated future intentions of dedicated golfers and how those intentions are influenced by the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience. For these reasons, the study's findings are especially important for practice. The golf industry continually seeks ways to grow the game, and many of the findings from this study highlight opportunities to partner with these facilities to capture Topgolf and Drive Shack customers who are influenced by their visits to these facilities. Findings also inform recommendations that may enhance the customer experience at traditional golf. Industry recommendations are provided throughout the chapter.

Restating the Research Aims and Questions

The first aim of this study was to examine achievement goal motivation orientation and social motivation for going to a Topgolf or Drive Shack facility. The sampling techniques employed for this study provided a sample comprised of subjects that the researcher has labeled "dedicated golfers" due to various golfographic measures. See Chapter 1 for a more detailed explanation for the use of the term "dedicated golfer" and its implications.

The impact of an experience design that emphasizes socialization on participants was of particular interest in this study. The second purpose was to investigate how Topgolf and Drive Shack customers' experiences impacted their future intentions both at these facilities and at traditional golf courses. The study sought to explore if golfers showed similar motivation profiles, and if so, how those clusters of golfers differed in terms of golfographics, demographics, and future intentions.

The research aims stated above were addressed via the research questions listed below:

R^1: What are the experience use history and demographic profiles of dedicated golfers who have visited Topgolf or Drive Shack?

R^2: What are dedicated golfers' motivations for visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

> R^{2a}: What are dedicated golfers' achievement goal orientations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

> R^{2b}: What are dedicated golfers' social motivations when visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

> R^{2c}: What is the relationship among Topgolf and Drive Shack visitors' demographics, experience use history, achievement goal orientations, and social motivations?

R^3: What are dedicated golfers' future golf intentions, both at nontraditional golf experiences and at traditional golf courses, after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack?

> R^{3a}: What is the relationship among demographics, experience use history, future intentions, and motivations?

R[4]: What are the differences between private-access and public-access golfers' motivations to visit Topgolf and Drive Shack?

R[4a]: How do these differences influence future intentions for participation at Topgolf/Drive Shack and at traditional golf, if at all?

Findings from the study are summarized below followed by a more in-depth discussion of the results.

Key Findings and Contributions

This section summarizes the key findings and contributions to knowledge and to practice. More detailed descriptions and a discussion of these key findings and contributions are integrated into the following section entitled Interpreting the Results.

Key Findings

This study found utility in the concurrent use of achievement and social motivation frameworks to investigate participants in a sport setting. In Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT, they suggest that "relatedness" is one of the three key human motivators. Data from this study suggest that customers are primarily socially motivated to participate in a casual sport experience that integrates strong social components, such as those offered by Topgolf and Drive Shack. These data support existing achievement-oriented motivation (Nicholls, 1984) and social motivation (Allen, 2003, 2005) theories and their intersections, showing that participants who express a high task motivation also show high levels of social motivation to participate. This is especially important in more casual sport settings, and has implications both in theory and in practice.

The study also examined the influence of experiences delivered through the built environment on participants' motivations and future intentions. These findings support existing

research in the field of the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) and its potential impacts specific to motivation. The current study's findings indicate that the experiences offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack have an impact on social motivation, task-oriented motivation, and future intentions, especially among golfers who do not have a private club membership. These findings support recent work by Funk (2017) and Yoshida (2017), encouraging sport managers, both in spectator and in participant sport settings, to consider the experience design, including service quality and social interactions, and how these design factors might influence participants' experiences and thus, future intentions.

The study resulted in multiple important lessons learned for the golf industry, resulting in actionable suggestions for golf associations, golf leaders, and both off-course and traditional golf facilities.

Methodologically, this study found the mixed methods approach to produce robust, interesting results that look beyond just statistical data and tell a richer story about how people view the experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack.

Key Contributions to Knowledge

The current study was one of the first to use both achievement goal theory (Nicholls, 1984) and social motivational orientation theory (Allen, 2003, 2005; Hodge et al., 2008). Specifically, it was the first of its kind to use both theories in a sport setting that emphasizes socialization. While this is not a unique combination of sport with a social focus (e.g. billiards, darts, bowling), research investigating the interactions between achievement and social motivations has not been conducted in such settings. At the intersection of achievement goals and social orientation goals, the current study supported Duda's (1989) findings from a study of high school athletes that people with high task-oriented motivation also exhibit high social motivation.

Specifically, this study found that those who scored high in task-oriented motivation scored high in social *affiliation* motivation, but relatively low in social *status* and *recognition* motivation. This was a novel discovery not previously noted in the literature.

This was also the first study to use the experience economy framework (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) to examine the effect of the built environment and experiences on achievement and social motivation. During Phase Two of this study specifically, themes emerged that supported the original experience economy framework and related it to motivation. Interviewees identified the "escapist" realm of experience most often, praising the active and immersive qualities of the experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 102). The experience design at Topgolf and Drive Shack was found to be impactful on subjects' positive experiences. Specifically, the design influenced subjects' ability to socialize with friends, family, colleagues, and clients. These findings support previous work that suggests that an experience design can influence motivation (Asan & Emeksiz, 2018; Funk, 2017; Yoshida, 2017).

The study also contributes to the fields of leisure and recreation constraints, substitutability, and future intentions (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Petrick et al., 2001; Sutton & Oh, 2015; Vaske, 1980). Results from Phase Two specifically inform theories about recreation substitution, supporting the work of Choi et al. (1994) that showed an interaction between social factors and alternative activities impact substitution choices. The current study showed evidence that due to the quality of the experience provided by Topgolf and Drive Shack and the socially-focused setup of the experience, some are willing to substitute those experiences for traditional rounds of golf.

The study employed a mixed methods approach (Creswell, 1994; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) that has not previously been used to concurrently investigate achievement and social motivation. The use of survey research and interviews allowed the researcher to realize the many benefits of mixed methods proposed by Greene et al. (1989) that were outlined in Chapter 3. Specifically, the benefits of complementarity, development, initiation, and the addition

of breadth and depth to the findings. As a result, the researcher recommends the use of mixed methods research to further examine motivation in sport.

Key Contributions to Practice

Findings from this study have the potential to influence change in the golf industry. The results inform practice both at off-course golf alternative facilities and at traditional golf courses. Most research about golf alternatives has focused on nongolfers and casual golfers (Beditz, 2021; Lombardo, 2018). The current study is the first to examine the motivations and future intentions of dedicated golfers at golf alternative facilities. This is important because of how critical dedicated golfers are to the health of the golf industry. With a better understanding of how dedicated golfers view the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience, golf industry associations, leaders, and professionals can use the findings of this study to better serve this population.

For off-course golf alternative facilities like Topgolf and Drive Shack, 80% of this sample indicated socialization as the primary motivator. Only 10% of the sample use these facilities for game improvement purposes. Specific to the three types of social motivation that were measured, the sample was most motivated by social affiliation, indicating that the primary social driver is to build and maintain meaningful relationships with others (Allen, 2003). Results from Phase Two indicate that the experience design (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) at Topgolf and Drive Shack strongly influenced interviewees' ability to socialize with others. The design characteristics of these facilities are critical to their success, and should be replicated at traditional golf facilities. Detailed suggestions on how these changes can be made and the potential impacts of such changes are provided later in this chapter.

The current study found significant differences between how private-access golfers and public-access golfers view the Topgolf and Drive Shack experience and the impact of that

experience on future intentions. Public-access golfers rated higher in task-oriented motivation and in social affiliation motivation. Public-access golfers also indicated a desire to play more traditional golf after going to a Topgolf or Drive Shack facility. These findings provide insight into the differences between these two subsets of dedicated golfers, specifically that experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack are perhaps more influential on public golfers than on their private member counterparts. Implications for these findings are presented later in this chapter.

Recommendations based on findings from this study for golf industry leaders, organizations, and facilities are provided below. While the current study did not investigate nongolfers and beginner golfers, many of the findings can be used by the industry to capture these populations. Topgolf and Drive Shack are seeing an unprecedented amount of nongolfers and beginner golfers come through their doors every year (Beditz, 2021), and there are opportunities to convert these customers into regular golfers. This can be accomplished through strategic partnerships between golf's leading associations (e.g. PGA, USGA), Topgolf and Drive Shack, and traditional golf facilities. This can also be achieved through strategic programming, examples of which are presented later in this chapter.

We know that Topgolf and Drive Shack see a more diverse customer base than traditional golf (Lombardo, 2018). Suggestions on how to build upon this momentum towards more diversity, equity, and inclusion in golf are also discussed below. This would be a welcomed departure from the historical exclusionary practices outlined by Moss (2001).

Interpreting the Results

This section provides an in-depth discussion of the results of the study. It begins with a discussion about the sample compared to the average Topgolf and Drive Shack customer. Each research question is then discussed, beginning with achievement and social motivations, then

focusing on future intentions, then offering a closer look at the comparisons between public-access and private-access golfers. The section closes with a discussion centered around themes that emerged during Phase Two of the study that did not directly address the original research questions.

Contextualizing the Sample

It is important to contextualize the sample of this study and compare it to the average customer at a Topgolf or Drive Shack facility. According to Lombardo (2018), many Topgolf participants are new to the game of golf, with 51% of participants self-identifying as new golfers, and another 27% reporting as only occasional golfers (1-7 rounds at a traditional course per year).

The sample from the current study differed considerably from the typical Topgolf population, as was presented in Chapter 4, where the sample was described as being comprised of dedicated golfers. With a sample that has such considerable differences to the average Topgolf and Drive Shack customer, it is to be expected that responses might also differ substantially. This is both a benefit and a limitation of this study, and will be discussed in depth throughout this chapter.

Motivations

This study employed many motivation-related theories. The overarching meta-theory of Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Deci & Ryan, 1985) framed the study's foci of motivation, initiative, and achievement in the fields of recreation and sport. Two SDT sub-theories, achievement goal theory (Nicholls, 1984) and social motivational orientation theory (Allen, 2003,

2005), were chosen specifically because of the way Topgolf and Drive Shack combine elements of sport and social motivation.

Reasons for Visiting

Most golfers go to a traditional driving range with the purpose of working on the golf swing or practicing with the goal of improvement. Most traditional driving ranges have a similar setup that caters to game improvement and does not prioritize socialization. As was described in Chapter 1, where Topgolf and Drive Shack excel is by using the "stage" of a driving range to provide a memorable experience with a focus on socialization. The current study aimed to better understand why dedicated golfers choose to go to Topgolf and Drive Shack, and then to understand what about the experience landscape contributes to those decisions.

Over 80% of the current study's sample went to Topgolf and Drive Shack for social reasons. Approximately one in ten respondents went to either seriously work on their golf game or to practice the game in a unique setting. In Phase Two of the study, five of the seven interviewees cited social engagement as the primary motivator for going to a Topgolf or Drive Shack. The remaining two subjects emphasized how much they enjoyed the ability to work on their golf games in a unique, fun setting.

The reasons for visiting were important to identify, as these results laid the foundation for the motivational theory-based inquiries that followed. Clearly, dedicated golfers view Topgolf and Drive Shack as a social experience. In Phase Two, most interviewees agreed that Topgolf and Drive Shack provide excellent opportunities to socialize, and that their motivation go to these facilities differs from the motivation to play traditional golf. If dedicated golfers are being drawn to these facilities because of how the experience design enables socialization, it is advised that traditional golf facilities consider altering their offerings to capture more of this market. This can

be achieved through a redesign of practice facilities, building in more socially-focused programming, and creating an atmosphere that is more inclusive of golfers of all backgrounds and abilities.

Achievement Goal Motivation Orientations

Achievement goal theory (Nicholls, 1984) was used to investigate participants' motivation at Topgolf and Drive Shack. This framework is often used in a sport setting (Roberts, 2012). Duda (1989) found that people with a high task-oriented motivation often relate to pro-social views of the role of sport. Results presented in Chapter 4 and discussed below support Duda's findings.

The Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ, Duda & Nicholls, 1992) was modified and used to examine task and ego-oriented motivations of Topgolf and Drive Shack customers. The sample scored higher in task-oriented motivation than in ego-oriented motivation which suggests that for those who are motivated by achievement goals, the participants surveyed prioritize mastery and are more self-focused rather than measuring success against others. Discussions with the interviewees supported quantitative findings regarding achievement goal motivation. Only one of seven golfers indicated being motivated to go to Topgolf or Drive Shack by task-oriented achievement. No interviewees mentioned a desire to outperform others, indicating an absence of ego-oriented achievement motivation in the sample. These findings show that dedicated golfers are not going to Topgolf and Drive Shack for the purposes of competing against others. They may be satisfying this desire through their traditional rounds of golf. Again, traditional golf facilities should consider these findings to frame the role that practice facilities currently play in the lives of their golfers.

Results from the social motivational orientation inquiries, detailed below, indicate that this sample measures high on social affiliation orientation, supporting Duda's (1989) theory that high task-oriented individuals hold pro-social views of sport. This may also be influenced by the built environment at Topgolf and Drive Shack, which is an important takeaway of this study. Employing thoughtful experience design, recreation providers can build environments that prioritize task-oriented activities with a social component. The current study shows that there is a certain level of compatibility between task-oriented motivation and social motivation, as evidenced by how Topgolf and Drive Shack have taken a "skill" of hitting a golf ball and built a social experience out of that skill.

Social Motivational Orientation

This study measured social motivational orientations for going to Topgolf and Drive Shack, employing the Social Motivational Orientations Scale for Sport (SMOSS, Allen, 2003, 2005). The study used this framework because, as Allen (2003) stated, much of the early motivation research in sport employed SDT and Achievement Goal Theory, but largely omitted social motivation. Her SMOSS framework has been used primarily in youth sport. There is an identified need to use SMOSS in adult sport research, which was a goal for the current study (Hodge et al., 2008).

The results of this study showed a lack of social status-oriented and social recognition-oriented motivation for this sample at these facilities. Overwhelmingly, participants indicated a strong social affiliation orientation. In other words, participants in this study showed high motivation to enjoy time with others and develop social relationships at Topgolf and Drive Shack, rather than going to the facilities to "see and be seen" or to be recognized for going. For this sample, it is more about enjoying time with friends and family.

These findings align with Hodge et al. (2008), who studied Masters athletes who participated in serious sport. The athletes were "predominantly affiliation- and task-oriented", and "social status orientation scores were low-to-moderate and ego orientation was noticeably low" (p. 170). Grant (2001, in Hodge et al., 2008) found that "older adults have a strong focus on the social affiliation aspects of participation in sport" (p. 170), which also aligns with these findings. It is telling that the findings were similar in both the Hodge et al. study and the current study because both studies were comprised of samples that are dedicated to the sport being studied. Where common thought might indicate that more dedicated athletes would be focused on the sport, both studies showed evidence of socialization being an important part of sport.

Interviews added to these findings, where the primary theme surrounding social motivation was the desire to nurture relationships and enjoy the company of others. Participants went with family, friends, and even business clients to Topgolf and Drive Shack and praised the setup as a primary contributor. The pressure-free environment, according to Golfer 6, allows him to have fun and build relationships with his clients. Golfer 5 sees the setup as being perfect for many occasions. Golfer 7 compares Topgolf and Drive Shack to traditional driving ranges, saying "It's more of a place to go have fun with friends than it is a driving range where you go to work on your game."

The interviewees clearly feel that the built environment and the setup at Topgolf and Drive Shack enable and enhance social interactions. As stated earlier, Gibbs and Holloway (2018) argue that the experience economy can be especially impactful through the production of "experience landscapes" (p. 248) with design features being deliberately installed to attract and retain participants. Clearly, Topgolf and Drive Shack have done just this, creating a built environment that provides an experience environment that puts an emphasis on socialization.

This study's inquiry into social motivation in sport at these facilities resulted in conclusive findings. Users go to Topgolf and Drive Shack to build meaningful relationships with

others. While there may be exceptions, these companies are facilitating social experiences, and those experiences are what drive people to walk through the doors.

Motivation Clusters

One of the original aims of the current study was to investigate whether Topgolf and Drive Shack customers have "motivational profiles". As Hodge et al. stated, "Given the salience of both achievement and social goals for sport participation, the use of complementary theoretical models (social motivation model and achievement goal theory) should enhance a comprehensive understanding of behavior, affect, and behavioral processes" in sport (2008, p. 162). While their team investigated competitive sport, the drive of this study was to examine a less competitive and more social sport setting. Minimal research combining these two motivation sub-theories has been conducted in this setting.

This study sought to understand the relationships of social and achievement motivations and then investigate what factors contribute to these relationships. A cluster analysis was used to explore these relationships and to see if participants in the study showed similar motivational profiles. The analysis, presented in Chapter 4, resulted in four clusters of golfers with varying levels of task, ego, social status, social recognition, and social affiliation motivations.

The ensuing ANOVA tests, used to compare cluster means of independent variables (i.e. demographics, golfographics, future intentions), provided very few statistically significant, remarkable differences. These non-significant results indicate that mean scores for the clusters, apart from motivation scores, "are statistically equal to each other" (Vaske, 2008, p. 405). These results can be categorized as "null results" (Landis et al., 2014, p. 163). Landis and colleagues state, "…we believe that those (null results) produced through rigorous designs may provide

important information" (p. 164). In this case, it is probable that the homogeneity of this sample contributed to the null results.

This indicates a limitation of this study in the sampling techniques used, and perhaps speaks to the homogeneity of the golfing public. As was first presented in Chapter 3, the researcher employed both convenience and purposive sampling (Lune & Berg, 2012), resulting in a sample that was drawn from a pool of dedicated golfers.

Future Intentions

It is important to understand behavioral intention in business (Lee et al. 2018). This study sought to understand the future intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants. Participants were asked about their future intentions at these golf alternative facilities as well as their future intentions at traditional golf courses. The study further inquired about the impact of the Topgolf/Drive Shack experience on future intentions. The study was also informed by the substitutability in recreation and leisure framework to better understand substitution choices by participants (Iso-Ahola, 1986; Sutton & Oh, 2015; Vaske, 1980).

Future Intentions at Topgolf and Drive Shack

Results were overwhelmingly positive about intentions to return to Topgolf and Drive Shack in the future. Almost all of participants indicated they were either "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to return. When asked if they would choose Topgolf or Drive Shack for future "golf alternative activities", while nearly 79% said yes, future studies should investigate whether indoor golf simulators are capturing this market, and at what rate. It is important to know about the remaining 21% of respondents who did not indicate Topgolf or Drive Shack as their first

choice for golf alternative activities. Nine in ten people surveyed said they would recommend Topgolf or Drive Shack to a friend. Considering how important word of mouth is in marketing, this will help to grow both brands to nongolfers and golfers alike (Petrick, 2002). These findings again show that the experience that has been designed and is being offered at Topgolf and Drive Shack is extremely successful and leaves customers wanting to play more. This was the first study to investigate future intentions of dedicated golfers in this setting, and these findings indicate that the model is not only working on nongolfers and beginners, but also on people who have played the game for many years and are more skilled than the average golfer. This model, therefore, is finding success across different golfer profiles.

Future Intentions at Traditional Golf Courses

The golf industry continually seeks ways to attract people into the game. If the industry has reached a growth "equilibrium", as suggested by Tom Stine of Golf Datatech (personal communication, October 20, 2016), then industry professionals must look to new, innovative ways to attract new customers.

Lombardo (2018) found that 75% of nongolfers who were interviewed after playing at Topgolf showed an interest in playing on a traditional golf course. While the current study's sample lacks nongolfers, it was important to investigate whether a Topgolf or Drive Shack experience impacts dedicated golfers' future intentions at traditional golf courses. Would Topgolf/Drive Shack take golfers away from traditional golf, or would these experiences have the opposite effect, encouraging golfers to play more frequently at traditional courses?

Most participants showed an *unwillingness* to replace traditional rounds of golf with visits to Topgolf and Drive Shack. This may be because many who were interviewed see the activities as unrelated. Golfer 2 spoke of the experience at Topgolf/Drive Shack, saying "…it's

not really like playing (traditional) golf". Golfer 5 spoke about how Topgolf doesn't satisfy her

needs as a golfer, saying "…there are no carts, courses, greens or beauty. And you hit off mats. It

satisfies my social needs, but not my needs as a golfer". Whether golfers see Topgolf and Drive

Shack as a fun alternative to golf or as a totally different activity, it is clear that Topgolf and

Drive Shack, at least among dedicated golfers, is not taking players away from the golf course.

Could these facilities have the opposite effect, encouraging people to play more

traditional golf? Some indicated that the experience at Topgolf/Drive Shack influenced them to

play more traditional golf. Golfer 4 said, "Yeah, you have fun at Topgolf and then you get the

bug!" These findings will be of particular importance to golf industry leaders and professionals

who are seeking ways to grow the game, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Comparisons Between Public-Access and Private-Access Golfers

While a comparison of public-access and private-access golfers was not an initial aim of

this study, the sample provided an opportunity to investigate this dichotomy in the context of their

experiences with Topgolf and Drive Shack. The sample had a balanced split of public- access (n

$= 65$) and private-access ($n = 57$) golfers. The researcher identified significant differences

golfographic profiles and demographic information, all of which were presented in Chapter 4.

This section will provide a discussion of differences in motivation profiles and in future

intentions between these groups.

Motivational Differences

One of the first significant differences that was identified between public-access and

private-access golfers was in motivation. The groups significantly differed in task-oriented

motivation and in social affiliation motivation. Public-access golfers rated higher in task orientation, suggesting they are motivated by seeking the ability to improve a task, in which golfers measures themselves based on self-provided criteria.

Public-access golfers also scored significantly higher in social affiliation motivation than their private-access counterparts. This finding is expected, according to Duda (1989), who indicated that those with a high task orientation would also hold a more pro-social view of the sport, with high social affiliation scores indicating a focus on developing and maintaining mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships.

These differences suggest that golfers who do not have a private club membership are motivated to go to Topgolf and Drive Shack in different ways than those who have a membership. Private-access members are motivated less by seeking the opportunity to improve at golf, suggesting that there are opportunities to do so at the club, and thus do not see Topgolf/Drive Shack as a game improvement facility. Private-access golfers were also significantly less motivated by factors contributing to social affiliation, suggesting that those needs are also perhaps satisfied at the club.

What does this mean for the golf industry? These findings show that Topgolf and Drive Shack can play an essential role in the golfing lives of public-access golfers. Whereas private club members presumably have access to game improvement and social affiliation opportunities at the club, public access golfers are seeking opportunities to fulfill these needs at these facilities.

When asked in Phase Two about the opportunity to take lessons from certified professionals at both Topgolf and Drive Shack, most interviewees, including the public-access golfers, were unaware that these programs existed. When considering the higher task-oriented motivation of public-access golfers from this sample, there is seemingly an opportunity to take advantage of this and help people improve their golf skills. Topgolf and Drive Shack would benefit greatly from enhanced marketing of their instruction programs.

Private clubs can also learn from these results, and perhaps integrate changes to address the needs of their members. Private club members are frequenting Topgolf and Drive Shack. Managers of private clubs should ask what is being offered at those facilities that causes their members to choose a Topgolf or Drive Shack visit over a visit to the club. If members see the club's practice facilities as simply a place to work on game improvement, clubs may not be getting the most out of these facilities.

Some clubs, like Old Memorial Golf Club in Tampa, Florida, have built practice facilities to be more than just game improvement areas. Instead, at one of their two driving ranges, Old Memorial plays loud music, ensures that food and beverage service is available, and provides opportunities for socialization. This setup encourages members to "hang out" at the practice facility and enjoy the company of others. This model can and should be replicated at private clubs to mimic the social experience provided at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Suggestions for how to execute this are included later in this chapter.

Comparing Future Intentions

An important finding of this study was that public-access golfers indicated a stronger desire to play more traditional golf after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack compared to their private-access counterparts. Almost half of the public golfers surveyed indicated a desire to play *more* traditional golf after visiting Topgolf or Drive Shack. At first glance, this shows that the experience at Topgolf and Drive Shack is positive and impactful on public golfers, and that they leave wanting to play more. These findings support the Lombardo (2018) study, which found that 75% of *nongolfers* who were interviewed after playing at Topgolf showed an interest in playing on a traditional golf course. Presented with the findings from these two studies, it is clear that nongolfers and dedicated public-access golfers are influenced positively by the experience.

The golf industry can and should capitalize on these findings. There is an excellent opportunity for golf's governing bodies, namely the PGA of America and the United States Golf Association, to facilitate onboarding between Topgolf, Drive Shack, and traditional golf facilities. Revisiting the NGF's Vice President of Player Development and Engagement Ted Eleftheriou's suggestions first presented in Chapter 1, the NGF and other organizations already have programs in place to "bring adult nongolfers to the game and convert them into committed golfers…" (2021). The NGF version of this effort is called *Welcome2Golf*. A recent NGF study "suggests that golf courses offering specialized adult beginner programs enjoy a 38% conversion rate when it comes to creating new, committed golfers, compared to a 25% success rate for those that don't". In 2020 alone, that difference of thirteen percent equates to 300,000 conversions.

Taking Eleftheriou's (2021) suggestions one step further, not only should the industry support beginner programs, but the industry should establish onboarding programs that convert the 12 million golfers per year who *only* access the game at off-course facilities into golfers who also patronize traditional golf courses. During his interview Golfer 1, a public-access golfer, suggested that local facilities should partner with Topgolf and Drive Shack by distributing vouchers to play golf during non-peak hours, such as at the end of the day. These kinds of partnerships have the potential to capture a massive market, benefitting all involved.

Joe Beditz, CEO of the National Golf Foundation, agrees. He states, "Our research tells us that the approachable, non-intimidating environments of Topgolf, and venues like it, help to cultivate interest in the traditional game. Course operators in proximity to these golf entertainment venues should be doubling down on their marketing and player development investments, as there are an increasing number of customer prospects being generated right in their backyards" (2021).

The suggestions above address nongolfers and public-access golfers, most of whom have expressed a desire to play more traditional golf. In the current study, however, private-access

golfers did not show the same desire to play more traditional golf after a Topgolf or Drive Shack visit. This may be influenced by the amount of golf that private-access members already play. The study found that private-access golfers play nearly twice as many rounds as public-access golfers. It is possible that their opportunities to play golf are already saturated, and there is no room for "more golf".

Further Takeaways from Phase Two

Phase Two provided an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how golfers view their experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Seven golfers were interviewed for Phase Two, and a number of important themes emerged that did not fit squarely into the original research questions. These themes, the takeaways, and the implications for both future research and for practical purposes, are presented below.

The Built Environment

Chapter 1 outlined the Experience Economy framework, which suggests that "…people no longer focus so much on material possessions but on the experiences they are able to have in their lives" (Henley Centre, 2005, p. 29). Experiences like those provided by Topgolf and Drive Shack provide many benefits, including the opportunity for more social connections (Van Boven et al., 2010). The experiences are facilitated through a well-crafted and engaging built environment highlighted by comfortable and inviting spaces, innovative technologies, and a friendly hospitality staff. Interviewees all agreed that the environment at Topgolf and Drive Shack has a strong influence on the overall experience. To contextualize Topgolf and Drive Shack using a component of Experience Economy framework, these facilities are using the *stage*

of a driving range to provide a memorable *experience*, and this setup has been incredibly

successful.

These findings support recent work by Funk (2017) and Yoshida (2017) about experience

design in sport management. Funk's "sport experience design" framework provides important

foci for sport organizations, including building an experience with multiple touchpoints and

having a business model that considers the customer's unique needs and characteristics. Yoshida

encourages sport managers, both in spectator and in participant sport settings, to consider the

interrelatedness of a core product or experience, service quality, and social interactions. Topgolf

and Drive Shack are providing experiences that deliver on these principles and are seeing great

success.

What can the golf industry learn from these findings? Traditional golf courses can and

should look into building in some of the facets that make Topgolf and Drive Shack so successful.

Golfer 7 suggested that he would like to see some of the technology, such as interactive targets

and gamification of the driving range experience be brought to traditional golf facilities. He and

others saw an opportunity to increase the social draw of traditional golf course practice facilities

through the adoption of many of the elements of the built environment at Topgolf and Drive

Shack, such as sitting areas, heaters in the wintertime, and food and beverage operations. This

would transform practice facilities into golf community centers where people treat the driving

range as its own fun, exciting, social experience.

Old Memorial Golf Club in Tampa, Florida was identified as a private club that

thoughtfully crafted a fun, engaging, and social environment at their practice facilities. They

achieved this through on-demand food and beverage services, by breaking the traditions of "quiet

and order" and playing loud music, and installing areas for members and guests to gather and

socialize while working on game improvement.

Others are seeing an opportunity and planning future transformation of traditional golf course-based practice facilities. One such private club, the Union League of Philadelphia, has a portfolio of three golf facilities that is overseen by Director of Golf Sean Palmer, PGA. Palmer and his team have plans to completely transform their facilities into social, engaging, and exciting resources for their members and guests to enjoy (personal communication, January 20, 2022). At their Torresdale facility in Philadelphia, the practice facility that is under construction will have an indoor/outdoor patio and bar with full food and beverage service. It will have a great room with a fireplace for lounging and entertaining, and it will be heated for twelve-month use. They have plans to wire for lights to enable golf at night and for sound, to promote a more social environment. This model will be one of the first of its kind at a traditional golf course and will undoubtedly be a resounding success.

In another example of how some traditional facilities are altering their existing facilities, Sailfish Sands Golf Course, a public facility in Martin County, Florida, is building a Topgolf-like structure at the driving range and installing Topgolf's proprietary "Toptracer Range" technology in an effort to re-create the Topgolf experience at the course. The course also has a beginner-friendly nine-hole course on property. It will be interesting to monitor this facility's results, as Sailfish Sands has an opportunity to welcome and then convert nongolfers and beginners into more frequent golfers through this unique setup.

Comparing and Contrasting the Settings

Interviewees were asked if Topgolf and Drive Shack provide something that traditional golf courses lacked. Many of the themes that emerged were centered around the built environment, detailed above. However, many of the golfers talked about the relaxed atmosphere and the de-emphasis on golf skills. Golfer 4 said, "Topgolf has a very laid-back atmosphere. It's

not stuffy, which allows a whole different group to enjoy the game." Golfer 6 agreed, saying that

the setup "…knock(s) down the wall that keeps so many people out of golf." This opportunity to

be inclusive of populations that are not typically seen at traditional golf courses is another key

takeaway from this study. The potential impacts of building facilities that knock down previously

existing barriers is extremely appealing and should be explored by golf industry leaders and

professionals. Traditional norms have been shifted at Topgolf and Drive Shack, where customers

wear whatever they want, are encouraged to eat and drink while playing, and are emboldened to

let loose, be loud, and have fun.

However, the grass is not always greener at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Interviewees were

asked what traditional golf provides that Topgolf and Drive Shack lack. Four themes were

identified, focusing on the variety of conditions and skills that traditional golf provides and

demands, the opportunity to be in nature, the scoring system of traditional golf, and the

community that can be found at traditional courses, especially at private clubs.

Diversity and Inclusion

Chapter 1 provided a brief history of golf in America, focusing on themes of exclusivity

and active efforts to curtail the growth of the game of golf to wider, more diverse populations

(Moss, 2001). The researcher then highlighted golf alternatives and their role in the expansion of

golf to new, more diverse players. Lombardo (2018) found that Topgolf is cultivating a more

diverse customer base than what currently exists at traditional golf courses. It can be assumed that

Drive Shack is doing the same. Throughout the interviews, many participants mentioned how

refreshing it is to see diversity at Topgolf and Drive Shack. As a final question of each interview,

participants were given the opportunity to speak more directly about diversity and inclusion, to

describe what they have experienced at these facilities, and to offer thoughts on how the golf industry can build upon this encouraging development.

All interviewees saw opportunities to make golf more inclusive and to diversify its customer base, and they see Topgolf and Drive Shack as both models and as onramps for these changes. Perhaps most telling was the enthusiasm with which Golfer 6 exclaimed that Topgolf and Drive Shack "…knocks down barriers!" He went on to explain that the low-pressure environment that emphasizes casual socialization is much more approachable than what is typically seen at traditional golf courses. Golfer 2 remarked about the diversity of employees at Topgolf and Drive Shack, calling for a more diverse workforce at traditional courses.

When asked how the golf industry can directly capitalize on the diversity that is being seen at these facilities, Golfer 3 saw an opportunity for partnerships between Topgolf/Drive Shack and golf associations and courses. The United States Golf Association and the PGA of America have an opportunity to propose programming to do just this, and should be encouraged to work with Topgolf and Drive Shack to think of ways to onramp their customers to traditional courses.

There are remarkable opportunities for an industry that has traditionally been perceived as exclusionary (Moss, 2001) to embrace diversity in many forms and become an inclusive game, reaching people from races and ethnicities who are rarely seen on golf courses, and to be more inviting to women. Revisiting Eleftheriou's (2021) suggestions, programming is the key to successfully welcoming new populations into the game. With proper programming in place, industry professionals can present golf as a more welcoming, inclusive game. The PGA of America's beginner golfer-focused "Get Golf Ready" program does a nice job of introducing players to the game in a nonthreatening, fun setting. Courses should also use lower traffic hours to invite nongolfers out for discounted rates that includes orientation from well-trained and

welcoming staff members. These are just a few suggestions for programming that can have a positive influence on the golf industry.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

Limitations

This study aimed to understand the motivations and future intentions of participants at Topgolf and Drive Shack facilities. Random sampling of existing Topgolf and Drive Shack databases would have been the preferred sampling method to capture a representative sample (Lune & Berg, 2012, p. 39).

The study's small sample size (n = 135) was a limitation of the study for a number of reasons, the most important of which was a lack of variability among members of the sample. A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was employed, leveraging the primary researcher's golf industry network (Lune & Berg, 2012). This network included golf professionals who work as instructors and as professionals at private clubs and public courses, with customer bases that are very active in the game of golf. This resulted in a relatively homogenous sample the majority of which were white (86%) males (91%) many of whom have played the game for more than ten years (63%) and have an average 18-hole score of just over 84. The researcher attributes this homogenous sample to sampling techniques, which is a limitation of the study. Future research should pursue opportunities to work with these companies to gain access to their more diverse databases.

Data were collected from March through May of 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Topgolf and Drive Shack facilities were all open during the collection period, but in many parts of the country, the facilities had only recently reopened. Participants were asked to reflect upon

their most recent visit to a Topgolf or Drive Shack within the previous twelve months. This may have impacted response rates. It also may have resulted in participants attempting to recall experiences that occurred many months prior, which can result in recall bias. According to Spencer et al. (2017), recall bias is "a systematic error that occurs when participants do not remember previous events or experiences accurately or omit details", and is a problem in studies that use self-reporting.

      Phase Two provided important, rich data that meaningfully enhanced the understanding of this sample's motivations and future intentions regarding their experiences at Topgolf and Drive Shack. Respondents from Phase One self-selected into Phase Two. According to Lavrakas (2008), "In most instances, self-selection will lead to biased data, as the respondents who choose to participate will not well represent the entire target population" (p. 808).

Future Research

      The achievement goal orientation theoretical framework has been used to examine sports, and specifically has been used to examine golfers (Dewar & Kavussanu, 2011; Duda, 1989; Gaudreau & Braaten, 2016; Ntoumanis, 2001; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999). Much of the existing research using achievement goal theory in sport has focused on satisfaction (Dewar & Kavussanu, 2011), affect and goals (Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999), and enjoyment and satisfaction (Roberts, 2012).

      According to Hodge et al. (2008), "Researchers employing achievement goal theory have made a substantial contribution to our understanding of motivation in sport; however, they have largely ignored the desire for *social connections* as an additional goal of action underpinning behavior in sport" (p. 160). This study was the first to use achievement motivation and social motivation constructs to investigate a facility that provides a sport experience with a strong social

component. Findings from this study show how task, ego, social affiliation, social status, and social recognition orientations interact in such a setting. Researchers are encouraged to use the achievement and social motivation constructs concurrently to continue the investigation on how these subsets of motivation interact.

The study also showed how these motivation orientations can be predictive of future intentions. Future researchers should expand upon this model in similar settings, such as bowling, where sport and socialization are presented as a combined experience.

Ideally, this study should be replicated with a sample that is more representative of the Topgolf and Drive Shack customer population. This will allow researchers to capture a more diverse demographic, including individuals who have never played golf at traditional courses. Findings from such a study will contribute to the motivation literature where this study could not, investigating motivations of those who are not yet committed to the sport. Studying a more representative sample will also provide excellent insights about the future intentions of those customers not captured in the current study, which will undoubtedly result in important findings for the hospitality, recreation, and golf industries.

Chapter 1 of this study introduced the concept of constraints to participation in golf (Jun & Kyle, 2011a; Jun & Kyle, 2011b; McGinnis & Gentry, 2006; Petrick, et al., 2001). Future research should use this framework to investigate leisure constraints with Topgolf and Drive Shack participants to gain a better understanding of the role of constraints in golf alternative settings compared to the role of constraints in traditional golf. This will shed light on what Topgolf and Drive Shack are doing well to attract such a robust and diverse customer base. Taking this a step further, it would be interesting to compare results of such a study to similar studies of traditional golfers and nongolfers.

Chapter 5 provided many suggestions for the golf industry based on the findings of this study. Many organizations and facilities are already taking action to capitalize on the Topgolf and

Drive Shack model, installing new and exciting technologies and facilities to allow for a similar experience. Governing bodies and organizations are encouraged to try to capture the nongolfers who patronize Topgolf and Drive Shack, and some facilities are already putting programming in place to do just that. Future industry research should investigate the effectiveness of such initiatives.

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Appendix A

Online Survey

<u>Introduction and Invitation to Participate</u>

Welcome,

You are invited to participate in this research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the motivations and future intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack participants.

The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the primary investigator, Brian Soulé, PGA via e-mail at bjs48@psu.edu.

Participation in this study will require approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. The study is comprised of an online survey. There are no risks or discomforts associated with this research. If you are not 18 years of age or older, please do not participate.

Any information obtained during this study that could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at meetings and conferences; however, the data will not contain any identifying information.

You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time. I appreciate your participation.

Sincerely,

Brian Soulé, M.S., PGA
Assistant Teaching Professor
PhD Candidate
Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management
The Pennsylvania State University

<u>SECTION A - Experience History and Golfographics</u>

Q1.1 During this survey, we ask that you evaluate your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf. The visit may have occurred since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic or in the year prior. Which facility did you visit most recently?
1. Drive Shack
2. Topgolf

Q1.2 Think of your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf. The visit may have occurred since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic or in the year prior. Was it your first time going to a Drive Shack or Topgolf facility?
1. Yes
2. No

[**If NO to Q1.2**] *Q1.3* Including that your most recent visit, how many **days in the previous month** (30 days) had you visited Drive Shack or Topgolf? ___ days (data entry)

[**If NO to Q1.2**] *Q1.4* Including your most recent visit, how many **days in the previous year** (12 months) had you visited Drive Shack or Topgolf? ___ days (data entry)

[**If NO to Q1.2**] *Q1.5* Including that day, how many **total years** have you been visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf? 1. 1 year or less
2. 2 years
3. 3-4 years
4. 5 years or more

Q1.6 Before your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf, had you played golf at a traditional golf course?
1. Yes
2. No

[**if YES to Q1.6**] *Q1.7* How long have you played golf?
1. I used to play golf, but I have not played at a traditional course in many years
2. Less than 1 year
3. 1-2 years
4. 3-5 years
5. 6-10 years
6. 11-20 years
7. More than 20 years

[**If NO to Q1.6**] *Q1.8* Please describe your experience with golf prior to your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf
1. I had never touched a golf club before
2. I had only played mini-golf or putt-putt before
3. I had been to a traditional driving range before
4. I had been to a Drive Shack or Topgolf or something similar before

Q1.9 If you typically play golf at a traditional golf course, how many rounds do you play per year? ____ rounds (data entry)

Q1.10 If you typically play at a traditional golf course, what is your average 18hole score?
1. My average 18-hole score is ____ (data entry number)
2. I do not know my typical score or I usually do not keep score
3. I do not play golf at a traditional golf course

Q1.11 How many golf lessons do you typically take from a certified professional per year? Please try to base your response on pre-COVID tendencies.
1. I have never taken a formal golf lesson
2. I have taken a golf lesson before, but not in the past year
3. 1-2 in the past year
4. 3-5 in the past year
5. 6-10 in the past year

6. 11 or more in the past year

Q1.12 Think of your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf. What was your <u>primary</u> reason for going?
1. To have fun
2. For the combination of activity and food and/or alcohol
3. I was on a date
4. To practice my golf skills in a serious or focused manner
5. To practice golf, but in a fun, relaxed setting
6. Company or corporate outing
7. Other (please describe) _____ (data entry)

Q1.13 If you play golf at a traditional golf course, which of the following statements best describes you?
1. I am a dues-paying member at a private club that has a golf course
2. I pay for a membership or a "golf plan" at a public-access course
3. I play at public-access courses and pay separately for each round that I play
4. I usually only play in golf "outings" for charities or company/corporate outings
5. I usually only play at resort or public courses while on vacation
Other (please describe): _____ (data entry)

SECTION B - TEOSQ

Q2.1 Please answer the following questions from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree".

"I feel really successful at Drive Shack or Topgolf when…"
1. I can keep practicing hard.
2. I work really hard at my golf game.
3. I learn a new skill by trying hard.
4. Something I learn makes me want to practice more.
5. I get the knack of doing a new skill.
6. A skill I learn really feels right.
7. I do something I couldn't do before.
8. I do my very best.
9. Others can't do as well as me.
10. I do better than my friends.
11. I beat the others.
12. To respond to this item, please choose option number 4: "Somewhat Agree"
13. I'm more skilled than other people.
14. Others mess up and I don't.
15. I'm the only one who can do the skill.
16. I'm the best.
17. I have the best score.

Q2.2 Consider your answers to the questions above. If you play golf at a traditional golf course, and the questions had asked you to consider your experience playing traditional golf, do you think your answers would:
1. Be mostly the same as above

2. Some would be similar and some would be different
3. Be mostly different from above. If so, how or why would your answers be different? _____
(data entry)
4. I don't play golf at a traditional golf course

SECTION C - SMOSS

Q3.1 Please answer the following questions from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree".

I feel things have gone well at Drive Shack or Topgolf when…

1. Others tell me I have performed well.
2. I make some good friends.
3. I belong to the popular group at Drive Shack or Topgolf.
4. My friends and I have a laugh together.
5. I am the center of attention.
6. I make new friends who I socialize with outside of my time at Drive Shack or Topgolf.
7. To respond to this item, please choose option number 2: "Somewhat disagree"
8. I have fun with the others in my group.
9. I am part of the "in" crowd.
10. Other people think I'm really good at golf.
11. I receive recognition from others for my accomplishments.
12. Spending time with the other players is enjoyable.
13. I become friends with some of the others.
14. Others are impressed by my ability.
15. I am one of the more popular people.
16. Just hanging out with the others is fun.

Q3.2 Consider your answers to the questions above. If you play golf at a traditional golf course, and the questions had asked you to consider your experience playing traditional golf, do you think your answers would:
1. Be mostly the same as above
2. Some would be similar and some would be different
3. Be mostly different from above. If so, how or why would your answers be different?
_____ (data entry)
4. I don't play golf at a traditional golf course

SECTION D - Future Intentions at Drive Shack or Topgolf

Q4.1 Please answer the following questions from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "extremely unlikely" to 5 meaning "extremely likely".

For the following questions, a "golf alternative activity" is considered any form of golf driving range, either traditional or similar to Drive Shack or Topgolf, or any form of indoor golf simulator.

For the following items, assume that your life goes back to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. The likelihood of me returning to Drive Shack or Topgolf for that activity is…
2. If I were to participate in a golf alternative activity in the future, the likelihood of me returning to Drive Shack or Topgolf for that activity is…
3. The likelihood that I would recommend Drive Shack or Topgolf to a friend is…
4. The likelihood that I would *never* return to Drive Shack or Topgolf is…

SECTION E - Future Intentions at Traditional Golf Courses

[**if YES to Q1.6**] *Q5.1* Please answer the following questions from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree".

1. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am considering replacing some of my visits to traditional golf courses with visits to Drive Shack or Topgolf instead.
2. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in playing golf more often at traditional golf courses in the future.
3. I consider Drive Shack or Topgolf and traditional golf to be different recreational activities

[**if NO to Q1.6**] *Q5.2* You indicated that before your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf, you had **not previously** played golf at a traditional golf course. Since that visit, have you played golf at a traditional golf course?
1. Yes
2. No

[**if YES to Q5.2**] *Q5.3* How many times have you played at a traditional golf course since your last visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf? ___ (data entry)

[**if YES to Q5.2**] *Q5.4* How soon after your visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf did you play golf at a traditional golf course?
1. Days ___ (data entry)
2. Weeks ___ (data entry)
3. Months ___ (data entry)

[**if NO to Q1.6**] *Q5.5* Please answer the following questions from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree".

1. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in trying golf at a traditional golf course in the future.
2. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in taking golf lessons in the future.
3. After visiting Drive Shack or Topgolf, I am interested in becoming a regular golfer at traditional golf courses in the future.

SECTION F - Demographics

Q6.1 Think of your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf. **Including you**, how many people were in your group that day?
1. ___ Adults (data entry)
2. ___ Children (under 18 years of age, data entry)

Q6.2 What is your home ZIP code? Or if you are not a U.S. resident, what is your home country?
_____ (data entry)

Q6.3 Think of your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf. How many miles from home did you travel to Drive Shack or Topgolf?
1. My visit occurred near my home and the distance I traveled (in miles) to the facility was:
_____ miles (data entry)
2. I was on vacation away from home, and Drive Shack or Topgolf was located where I was vacationing. My vacation was approximately this many miles from home: _____ (data entry)

Q6.4 How old are you? ____ (data entry number)

Q6.5 What is your gender?
1. Male
2. Female
3. Non-binary
4. Prefer not to say

Q6.6 With which racial/ethnic group do you most closely identify? [Check all that apply]
1. American Indian/Alaskan Native
2. Asian
3. Asian American
4. Black/African American/African Descent
5. Middle Eastern/North African
6. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
7. Spanish/Hispanic/Latino(a)
8. White/Caucasian/European American
9. Other _____ (data entry)

Q6.7 In which income category does your household fall? [Select **ONE** option]
1. Under $25,000
2. $25,000-$49,999
3. $50,000-$74,999
4. $75,000-$99,999
5. $100,000-$149,999
6. $150,000-$199,999
7. $200,000-$299,999
8. $300,000-$499,999
9. $500,000 or more
10. Don't Know

Q6.8 What is the highest level of formal schooling you have completed?
1. Less than high school
2. Some high school
3. High school graduate or equivalent (e.g. GED)
4. Some college, no degree
5. Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)
6. 4-year Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)
7. Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, Med)

8. Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)
9. Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)

Q6.9 Before the COVID-19 pandemic, how would you have described your employment status?
1. Full-time employed
2. Part-time employed
3. Self-employed
4. Unemployed and looking for work
5. Unemployed and not looking for work
6. Student
7. Homemaker
8. Retired
9. Unable to work

Q6.10 How many children do you have?
1. None
2. 1
3. 2-4
4. More than 4

Q6.11 What is your marital status?
1. Single, never married
2. Married or domestic partnership
3. Widowed
4. Divorced
5. Separated

Q6.12 Which of the following best describes your political orientation? [Select **ONE** option].
1. Extreme Liberal
2. Very Liberal
3. Slightly Liberal
4. Moderate
5. Slightly Conservative
6. Very Conservative
7. Extreme Conservative

Section G - Additional Questions

Q7.1 If you could ask management to improve some things about the operation of Drive Shack or Topgolf, what would you ask them to do? _____ [Data entry]

Q7.2 What aspects, if any, of the Drive Shack or Topgolf experience do you wish were integrated into a traditional golf course experience? How would you propose that these aspects be integrated? _____ [Data entry]

Q7.3 What aspects, if any, of the Drive Shack or Topgolf experience do you prefer over the traditional golf course experience? _____ [Data entry]

Section H - Invitation to Interview

Q8.1 Are you interested in participating in a 15-30 minute phone or videoconferencing interview to talk in more depth about the topics that were presented in this survey?
1. Yes
2. No

[**If YES to Q8.1**] External link provided.

Appendix B

Interview Guide

Time allocated for each interview: 30 minutes

Opening Comments

1. Thanks for helping with this study. I look forward to hearing more about your experience as a golfer, especially when it comes to Topgolf and Drive Shack.
2. First, a few business items.
   a. I plan to record this conversation, and before I ask for your consent, I assure you that the recording and transcript of this conversation will be stored on a secure Penn State server, and the only person with access to the recordings is me. While I plan to use quotes from today's conversation in my dissertation and in future publications, all personally identifying factors will be removed to ensure your anonymity. With all that in mind, do you give permission to me to record this call?
   b. **START RECORDING, then state that permission has been granted.**

Opening Questions

1. Can you tell me about how you were introduced to golf, how long you have played, and your skill level?
   a. Are you a member of a private club, or do you play most of your golf at public-access facilities?
2. Tell me a bit about why you enjoy going to Drive Shack and/or Topgolf and how often you go.

Motivation-Related Questions

1. During your most recent visit to Drive Shack or Topgolf, which facility did you go to, and what was your main purpose of going?
2. When you go to Drive Shack or Topgolf, would you say you go more for the *social* aspects of the experience, or do you go to *play and practice your golf skills*? Or maybe a combination of both?
   a. [follow-up if the interviewee indicates the primary draw is **social**]: What about the setup of Drive Shack/Topgolf influences the social aspects of the experience?
   b. [follow-up if the interviewee indicates the primary draw is the **sport/golf experience**]: What about the golf setup at Drive Shack/Topgolf is different or appealing to you?
      i. When you said you are motivated to go to TG/DS because of the **sport** component, would you say you are more interested in working on your golf swing? Or are you more focused on playing the games against your friends and competing with them?
3. Would you say that Topgolf/Drive Shack "satisfies" your golf needs? Why or why not?
   a. **Probing** – What does Topgolf/Drive Shack have or provide that traditional golf *lacks*?

      i.   What aspects do you like from Drive Shack or Topgolf that you *wish* were integrated into the traditional golf experience?

    b.   What does *traditional golf* have or provide that Topgolf/Drive Shack lacks?

4. How do you think your motivations to go to TG/DS compare with your motivations to play traditional golf?
    a. **Probing** – Do finances play a role in your decision to do one over the other?

Future Intentions-Related Questions

1. After having experienced Drive Shack and/or Topgolf, would you say you are interested in playing more traditional golf? Why?
    a. After going to TG/DS, do you think you will go to that kind of a facility **more** often? If so, do you foresee *replacing* your traditional rounds of golf with TG/DS visits?
    b. [follow-up] What about the Drive Shack/Topgolf experience played a role in how you plan to engage in golf in the future?
2. Do you think that for some, Topgolf/Drive Shack could be a "gateway into golf"?

General Experience Questions

1. One of the findings we had in our original study showed that "public access golfers" take fewer lessons than those who belong to private clubs. Why do you think this is? Are you aware of the lesson programs at TopGolf/Drive Shack? What do you think about those opportunities?
2. Research about Topgolf and Drive Shack has shown that these facilities are attracting a more diverse population that includes people from different races and ethnicities, age groups, and socioeconomic groups. Have you observed that during your visits? What are your thoughts about this diversification of the golfing population?

Is there anything else you want to talk about our mention about the role that Topgolf/Drive Shack plays or will play in the future of the golf industry?

Appendix C

Office for Research Protections IRB Exemption

Penn State Office for Research Protections Exemption Determination for IRB Review

PennState

Office for Research Protections
Vice President for Research
The Pennsylvania State University
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University Park, PA 16802

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EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

Date: January 25, 2021

From: Stephanie Krout,

To: Brian Soule

Type of Submission:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Understanding a New Breed of Golfer: Motivations and Future Intentions of Topgolf and Drive Shack Participants
Principal Investigator:	Brian Soule
Study ID:	STUDY00016849
Submission ID:	STUDY00016849
Funding:	Not Applicable
Documents Approved:	• Soule Dissertation Interview Questions 2021-01-21.docx (1), Category: Data Collection Instrument • Soule Dissertation Survey Draft 2021-01-20.docx (1), Category: Data Collection Instrument • Soule IRB New Breed of Golfer 2021-01-25 (2), Category: IRB Protocol

The Office for Research Protections determined that the proposed activity, as described in the above-referenced submission, does not require formal IRB review because the research met the criteria for exempt research according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations.

Continuing Progress Reports are **not** required for exempt research. Record of this research determined to be exempt will be maintained for five years from the date of this notification. If your research will continue beyond five years, please contact the Office for Research Protections closer to the determination end date.

Changes to exempt research only need to be submitted to the Office for Research Protections in limited circumstances described in the below-referenced Investigator Manual. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the Office for Research Protections.

Penn State researchers are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within CATS IRB (http://irb.psu.edu).

We would like to know how the IRB Program can better serve you.
Please fill out our survey; it should take about a minute: https://www.research.psu.edu/irb/feedback.
ID27

VITA

Brian J. Soulé

Education
___

Doctor of Philosophy: Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management May 2022
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA
Candidate, anticipated graduation – May 2022
Dissertation Title: *Golf and the Experience Economy: Understanding Dedicated Golfers'*
Motivations and Future Intentions at Golf Alternative Experiences

Master of Science: Sport and Leisure Service Management   August 2009
University of Nevada, Las Vegas   Las Vegas, NV
Thesis Title: *Determinants of Academic Achievement and Intention to Stay Among PGA Golf*
Management Students

Bachelor of Science: Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management December 2005
Clemson University   Clemson, SC
Professional Golf Management (PGM) Concentration

Academic Employment
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Assistant Teaching Professor / Director, World Campus Programs June 2018 – Present
Assistant Director / Internship Coordinator / Instructor   July 2009 – May 2018
The Pennsylvania State University   University Park, PA
Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management
PGA Golf Management Program (PGM)

Graduate Assistant   Aug. 2007 – May 2009
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, PGA Golf Management   Las Vegas, NV

Research Experience
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Conference Proceedings:

Soule, B., Busser, J, & Carruthers, C. (2012). Student determinants of academic achievement and program completion intention. Proceedings: *EuroCHRIE*: Lausanne, Switzerland.

Professional Experience and Memberships
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Professional Golfers' Association of America   Elected April 2006
Class A-11 PGA Professional
Member, Philadelphia PGA Section

PGA Head Golf Professional   July 2006 – July 2007
PGA Assistant Golf Professional   March 2006 – July 2006
Green Hill Yacht & Country Club   Quantico, MD